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THE NEW YORKER

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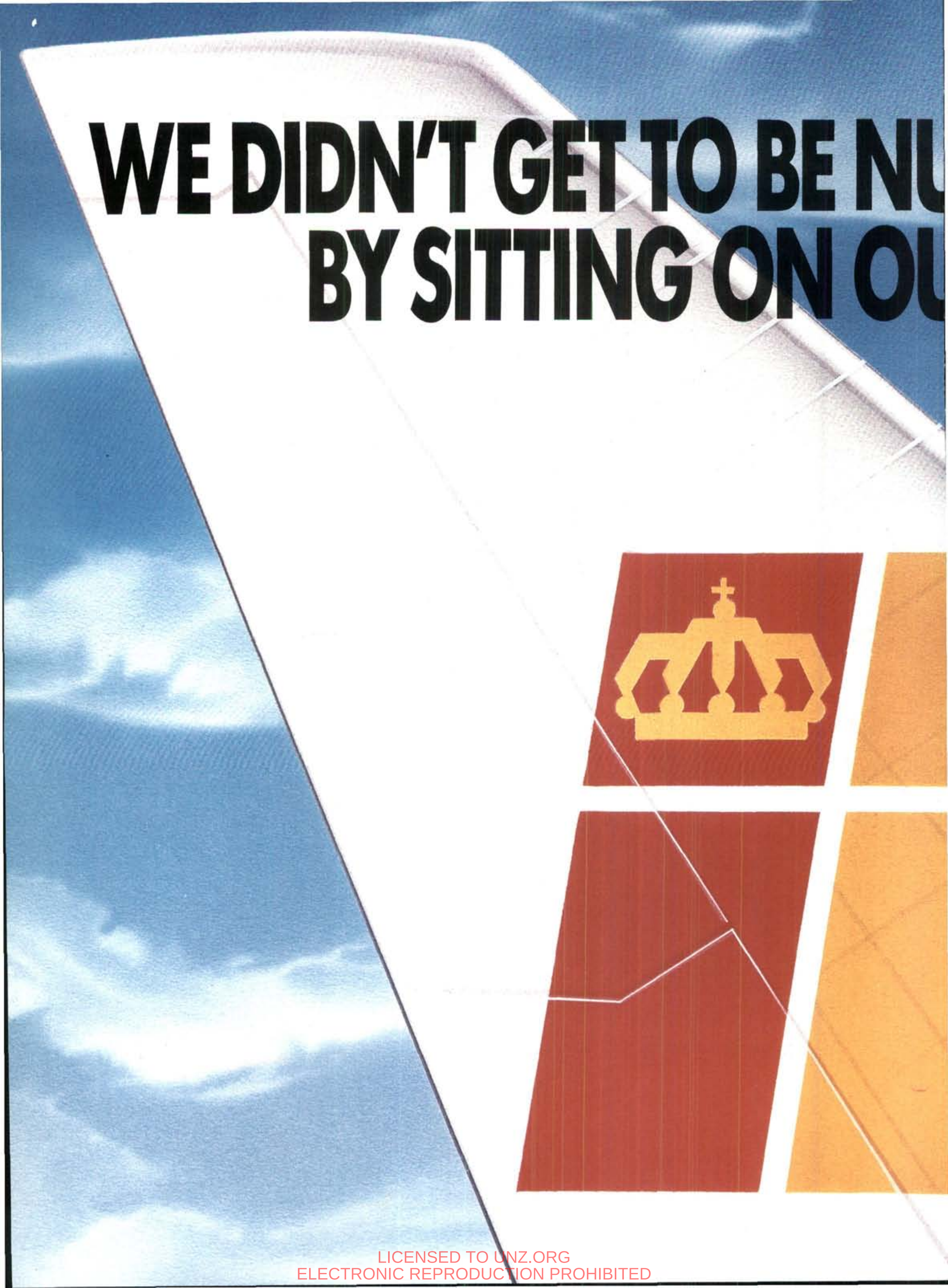
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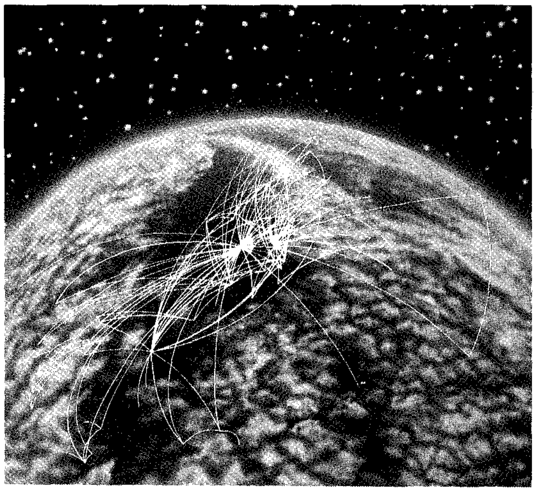

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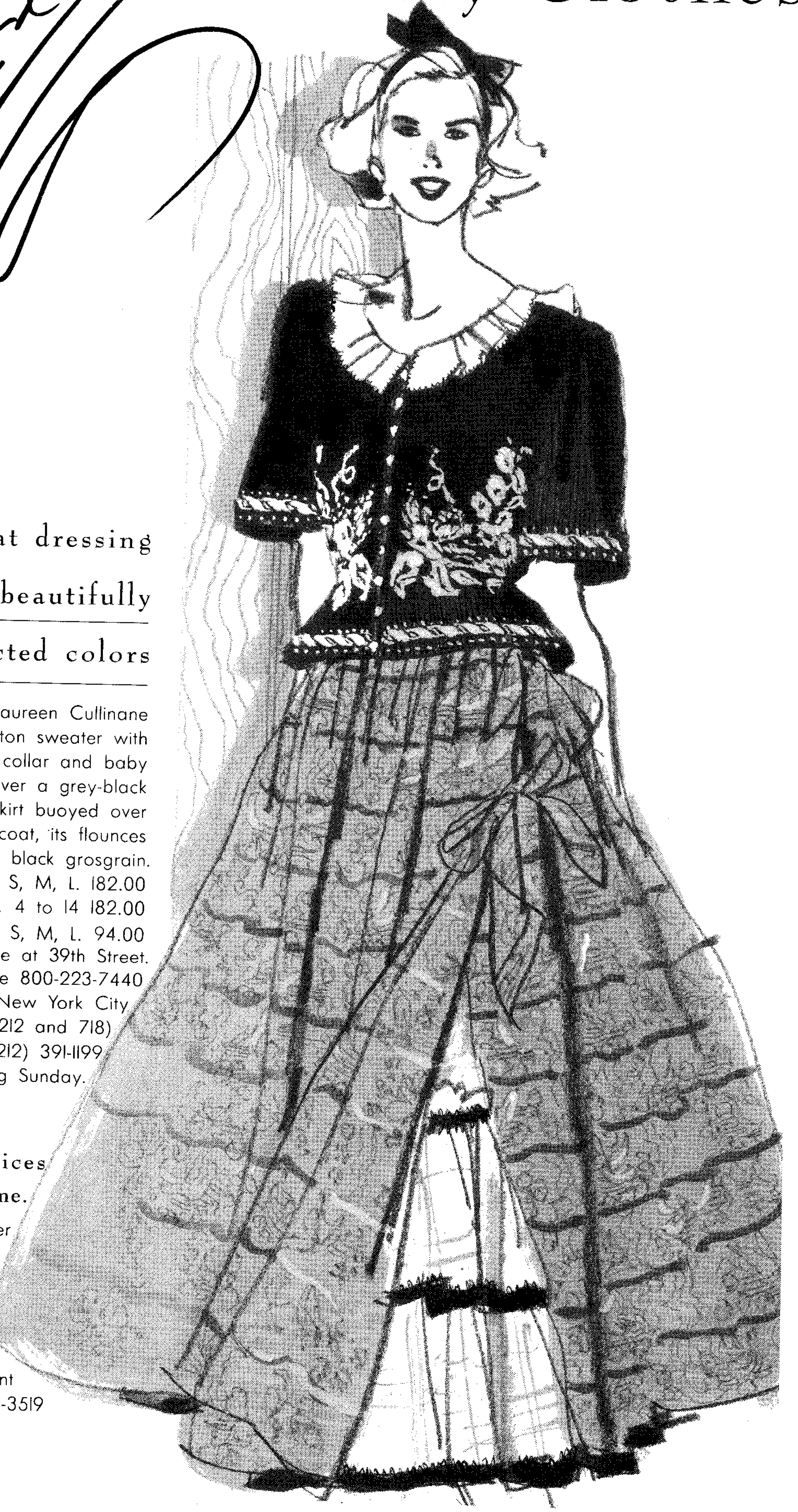

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			11	12	13	14
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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Boogie Woogie and Booker T—A play by Wesley Brown. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 15.)

Broadway Bound—A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. The cast includes Linda Lavin, Jonathan Silverman, John Randolph, Philip Sterling, Jason Alexander, and Phyllis Newman. The director is Gene Saks. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/15/86.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cast Me Down, The Tragedy of Booker T. Washington—A play by J. Howard Holland. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesday at 11 A.M. and 8, and Thursday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 15.)

Circle Repertory Company—A comedy whodunit by John Bishop, THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940, is the third in this season's series. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 9; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 22.)

Coastal Disturbances—Tina Howe's funny and beautiful play about love is set on a private beach on Massachusetts' North Shore. Annette Bening, as a photographer from this city, and Timothy Daly, as a lifeguard, are the beguiling lovers, and among the other actors, as summer people, are Rosemary Murphy, Jonas Abry, Heather Mac Rae, and Ronald Guttman. Carole Rothman is the able director. (12/1/86) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Colored Museum—A sharp, satiric revue on the subject of blackness and related matters, which is almost done in by damnable sound amplification. George C. Wolfe was the clever writer, and L. Kenneth Richardson the able director. The performers, all of them splendid, are Loretta Devine, Tommy Hollis, Reggie Montgomery, Vickilyn Reynolds, and Danitra Vance. (11/10/86) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sundays at 3.)

The Common Pursuit—An English import. Six Cambridge undergraduates, in the sixties, plan to launch a literary magazine in accordance with the rigorous standards of the critic F. R. Leavis, and in the ensuing twenty years manage to breach these standards. Simon Gray's play, while not especially original, is consistently entertaining, and it is very well performed, under the direction of the dramatist and Michael McGuire. (11/3/86) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Death and the King's Horseman—Wole Soyinka's drama about a Nigerian chief who, according to Yoruba law, must follow his king to death. Under the playwright's direction, the fascinating rituals and atmosphere of the African marketplace come across, but the story is not clearly told, and much of the irony goes by the board. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

Equity Library Theatre—The sixth in this season's series of eight productions is a revival of the 1939 musical TOO MANY GIRLS, with a score by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, and a book by George Marion, Jr. Opens on Thursday, March 12, and will run through Sunday, April 5. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Fragments of a Greek Trilogy—A revival of an Andrei Serban–Elizabeth Swados collaboration—distillations of "Medea," "Electra," and "The Trojan Women"—directed by Mr. Serban, with music by Miss Swados. The three works are performed in ancient Greek and Latin. "Medea": Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30, and Saturdays and Sundays at 6. . . . ¶ Double-bill performances of "Electra" and "The Trojan Women": Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes Sunday, March 22.)

Gay Divorce—An unsatisfactory revival of the 1932 Cole Porter show. (3/9/87) (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 22.)

A Girl's Guide to Chaos—A comedy by Cynthia Heimel. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 869-4731. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Groucho: A Life in Revue—A surprisingly lively and touching show about the great comedian/humorist. Frank Ferrante's dedicated impersonation becomes a true performance; Les Marsden, doubling, comes close to Chico and seems inspired as Harpo; and Faith Prince deftly acts the women in their lives, among them, of course, Margaret Dumont. Arthur Marx (son of Groucho) and Robert Fisher were the playwrights; Mr. Marx directed. (10/20/86) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Hunger Artist—Conceived and directed by Martha Clarke and "created with" the actors who perform it, this evocation in words, mu-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

sic, and dance of the works of Franz Kafka makes a long, depressing evening. (3/9/87) (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 265-4375. Tuesdays and Fridays at 8, and Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 7:30 and 9:30.)

Hunting Cockroaches—Janusz Glowacki's comedy—original and continuously entertaining—about a Polish couple, distinguished émigrés, who live in a slum apartment on the lower East Side. Dianne Wiest gives an exquisitely funny performance as the wife, an unemployable actress, and Ron Silver is very good, too, as her husband, a nonwriting writer. Under Arthur Penn's direction the spirit never flags. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 22.)

Jackie Mason's "The World According to Me!"—Jackie Mason is a classic standup Jewish comedian, the George Washington of the Borscht Belt. His material consists almost entirely of outrageous insults addressed to Jews, Italians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, and Wasps. (Only the Irish escape unscathed, and who knows why? Perhaps they are being offered the greatest insult of all.) For more than thirty years, Mason's audiences—that is, his victims—have found him hilarious, and the sorry truth of the matter is that he *is* hilarious, for reasons that might well cause Freud himself to break down and sob as he sought to explain them. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Knife—A musical by Nick Bicât (score), Tim Rose Price (lyrics), and David Hare (book). Mandy Patinkin and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio head the cast. Mr. Hare is the director. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Kvetch—A comedy written and directed by Steven Berkoff. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill—A play of sorts about one of Billie Holiday's last engagements, at a night club in Philadelphia. (9/29/86) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 6. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Me and My Girl—A fifty-year-old British musical once starred in by Lupino Lane. His worthy successor is Robert Lindsay, who in his day has played Hamlet and can evidently play anything. (8/25/86) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Miracle Worker—Karen Allen stars in a revival of William Gibson's play. Opens Wednesday, March 11. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Les Misérables—An English version of a French musical based on Victor Hugo's novel. Claude-Michel Schönberg wrote the music, and Herbert Kretzmer adapted Alain Boublil's original lyrics. Co-directed by Trevor Nunn and John Caird. Previews Wednesday, March 11. Opens officially on Thursday, March 12. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

My Gene—Colleen Dewhurst in a one-woman show about Carlotta Monterey, Eugene O'Neill's third wife. Written by Barbara Gelb, and directed by André Ernotte. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 22.)

On the Verge—A comedy by Eric Overmyer, presented by The Acting Company. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

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Sex Tips for Modern Girls—A musical with a book by Peter Eliot Weiss and score and lyrics by John Sereda. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

South Pacific—This production, by the New York City Opera, is haunted by the original, and apparently irreplaceable, performance; nevertheless, the score and lyrics and book are strong enough to carry it. This time, the stars are Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, and Joshua Logan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Stardust—The lyrics of Mitchell Parish, as sung and performed by an engaging company of three men and three women. The composers (over the past sixty-five years or so) include Duke Ellington, Hoagy Carmichael, and Leroy Anderson. The singers include André De Shields and, most notably, Michele Bautier. (3/2/87) (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Starlight Express—A new production of a current London musical, with a score by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Richard Stilgoe. Trevor Nunn is the director. Previews through Saturday, March 14. Opens officially on Sunday, March 15. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Stepping Out—Tommy Tune has skillfully directed a play by the English playwright Richard Harris, about some North London lonelyhearts who manage to establish contact with each other by learning to dance. Who would guess that this would make a happy evening in the theatre? But it does. (1/26/87) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sweet Sue—A failed comedy by A. R. Gurney, Jr., about a divorced artist in middle age and a young man who is her son's roommate at college. Four actors (Mary Tyler Moore, Lynn Redgrave, Barry Tubb, and John K. Linton) portray this woebegone couple, who love neither wisely nor too well. (1/19/87) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Widow Claire—Horton Foote continues to explore the lives of the citizens of Harrison, Texas. The principal characters here are a racy, nervous widow and young Horace Robedaux, played by Hallie Foote and Eric Stoltz. (12/29/86) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Women Beware Women—Howard Barker's drama, based on the seventeenth-century play of the same name by Thomas Middleton. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** A musical version of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Twain's great novel has been respectfully dealt with in a book by William Hauptman, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller. Heidi Landesman has somehow managed to put the Mississippi River onstage. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery and costumes by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DROOD:** Old-fashioned mock-Victorian nonsense, with book and songs by Rupert Holmes and direction by Wilford Leach. The cast is headed by George Rose. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,184 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES:** A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy, with Swoosie Kurtz and John Mahoney, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the director. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 15.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Ossie Davis and Hal Linden. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8 and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées

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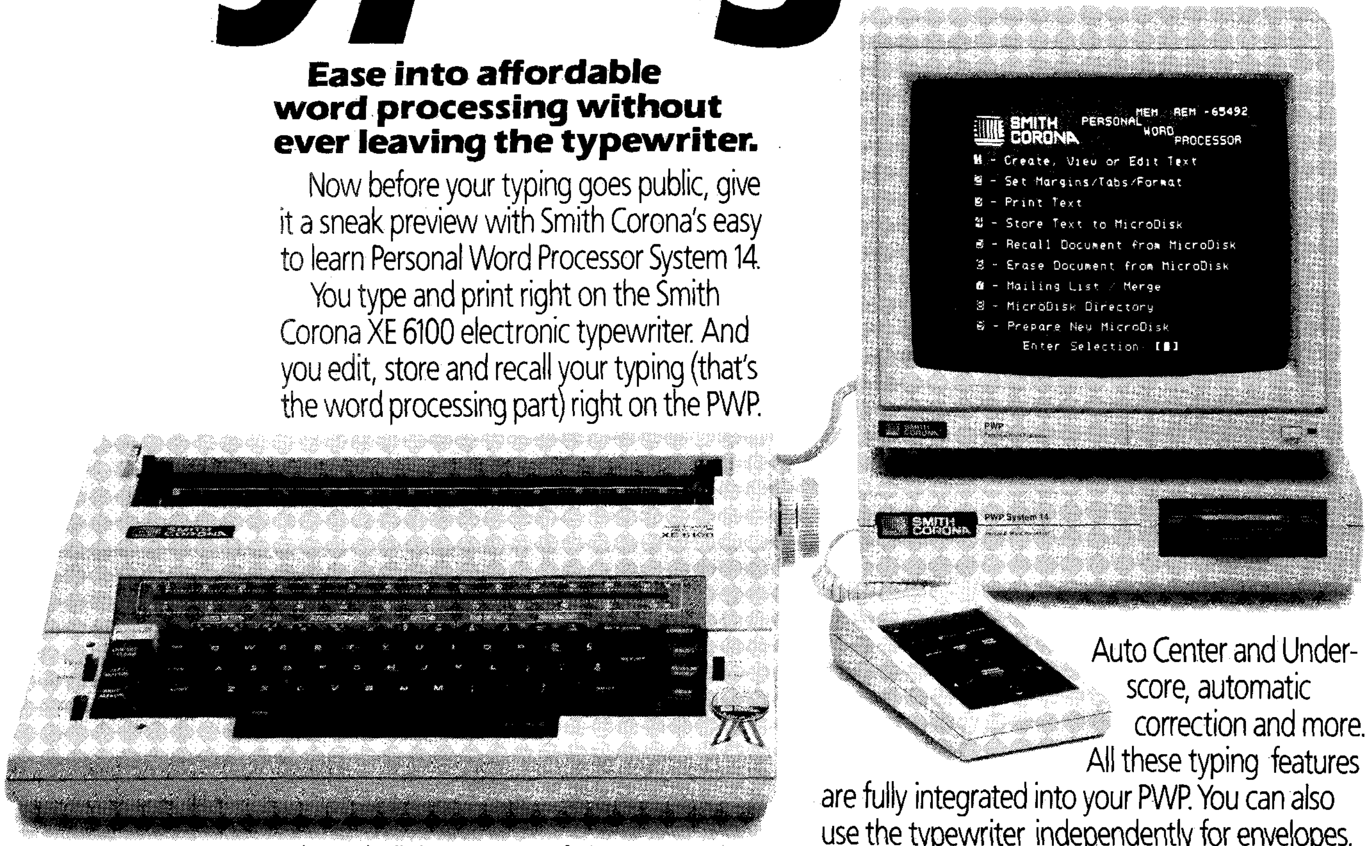
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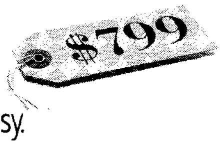

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Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SOCIAL SECURITY:** A lively, conventional comedy by Andrew Bergman. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SWEET CHARITY:** A hit twenty years ago and deservedly a hit today. Bob Fosse has been its chief maker, assisted by Neil Simon (book), Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields (songs), and Robert Randolph (scenery). Ann Reinking stars. The Tuesday, March 17, performance will have two sign-language interpreters. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Of Thee I Sing and **Let 'Em Eat Cake**—Double-bill concert performances of a 1931 musical and its 1933 sequel, by George and Ira Gershwin. Michael Tilson Thomas conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the New York Choral Artists, with Maureen McGovern, Larry Kert, and Jack Gilford. Opens Wednesday, March 18, and will run through Sunday, March 29. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Wednesday, March 18, at 7; Thursday and Friday, March 19-20, at 8; Saturday, March 21, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, March 22, at 2 and 7.)

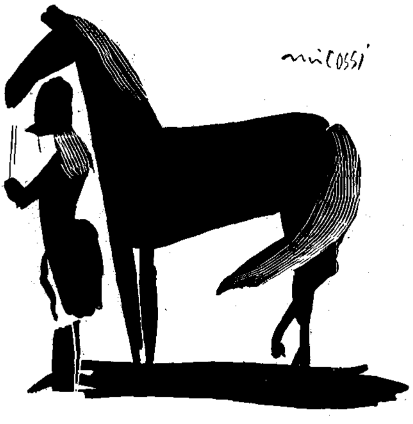
DANCE

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday, March 11, at 8: "Points in Space," "Locale," and "Grange Eve." . . . ¶ Thursday, March 12, at 8: "Locale," "Shards," and "Grange Eve." . . . ¶ Friday, March 13, at 8: "Septet," "Channels/Inserts," and "Pictures." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 14, at 2: "Locale," "Quartet," and "Points in Space." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 14, at 8: "Points in Space," "Shards," and "Fabrications." . . . ¶ Sunday, March 15, at 3: "Points in Space," "Shards," and "Grange Eve." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Feld Ballet—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday, March 11, at 8: "Play Bach," "Over the Pavement," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Thursday, March 12, at 8: "Play Bach," "Theatre," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Friday, March 13, at 8: "Bent Planes," "A Time Exposure," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 14, at 8: "Tzaddik," "Tarantella," "Over the Pavement," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Sunday, March 15, at 2: "Harbinger," "Medium: Rare," "Theatre," and "Play Bach." . . . ¶ Sunday, March 15, at 7:30: "Tzaddik," "Tarantella," "A Time Exposure," and "Skara Brae." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Dance Theatre of Harlem—Wednesday matinée and evening, March 11: "Footprints Dressed in Red," "Fancy Free," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday evenings, March 12-13; Saturday matinée and evening, March 14; and Sunday matinée, March 15: "Troy Game" and "Giselle." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, March 17, and Wednesday matinée and evening, March 18: "Bugaku," "Mirage," and "Toccata e Due Canzoni." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday evenings, March 19-20, and Saturday matinée, March 21: "Concerto Barocco," "Le Corsaire," "Agon," and "Concerto in F." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 21: "Concerto Barocco," "Le Corsaire," "Footprints Dressed in Red," and "Concerto in F." (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 239-6200. Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, April 5.)

Murray Louis Dance Company—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, March 29—Tuesday, March 17, at 7:30, and Thursday, March 19, and Saturday, March 21, at 8: "Geometrics," "The Disenchantment of Pierrot," "Interims," "Butterfly" (New York première), and "Kinetic Suite" (première), with guest artists Tigger Benford, percussion, and Ben Hazard, synthesizer. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 18, and Friday, March 20, at 8: "Revels," an unnamed solo work (première), "The Station," and "Bach Suite." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)



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Matthew Nash Music and Dance—Three programs of contemporary dance—Wednesday, March 11, and Friday, March 13, at 8, and Sunday, March 15, at 3: "Auction News," "Straight Run Naphtha," "Spigot," and "The Elements of Style." . . . ¶ Thursday, March 12, at 8, and Saturday, March 14, at 2 and 8: "Dark New Light (The Ben Casey Ballet)," excerpts from "Fashions of the 50's," and "Spigot." . . . ¶ Sunday, March 15, at 7: "Auction News," "Dark New Light (The Ben Casey Ballet)," "Straight Run Naphtha," and "The Elements of Style." (CSC Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble—A two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, March 22. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, W. 120th St. and Riverside Dr. 864-2929. Nightly, except Wednesday, March 11, and Monday, March 16, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

Brenda Bufalino's American Tap Dance Orchestra—A tap-dance company performing "The Four Seasons/Jazz Version," with guest artist Honi Coles. (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Friday, March 13, at 8; Saturday, March 14, at 3 and 8; and Sunday, March 15, at 7.)

Risa Jaroslow & Dancers—New and repertory works. (CSC Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Tuesday through Saturday, March 17-21, at 8, and Sunday, March 22, at 3.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Abilene Café, 359 Second Ave., at 21st St. (473-8908)—A corner bar and restaurant that offers ribs, liver, Bud, and several varieties of the blues. Chicago blues vet **JOHNNY LITTLEJOHN,** a wonderful slide guitarist and a strong singer, leads a band on Friday and Saturday, March 20-21. Music from nine.

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**MICHAEL FEINSTEIN,** the thirty-year-old singer-pianist who delivers his repertoire (Gershwin, Berlin, Harry Ruby) with old-fashioned romantic ardor, winds up his visit on Saturday, March 14. **MARGARET WHITING** starts singing on Wednesday, March 18. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen in the Oak Room. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** has a wee girl's voice but it is expressive and her diction is impeccable, and the songs she chooses to sing ("I'm Hip," "My Attorney, Bernie," "Bye-Bye Country Boy," "Bruce") are perfectly suited to her. Her concerts begin at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays. Artificial Intelligence, an eighteen-member comedy troupe, performs Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A large, carpeted, bemirrored jazz club with a spectacular piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with bright clusters of musicians on the dais. Tenor saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI'S** quintet shares the bill with guitarist **KEVIN EUBANKS'** trio through Sunday, March 15. Starting Tuesday, March 17, **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** will sing with the Concord Jazz All-Stars, featuring big-toned tenor saxophonist **SCOTT HAMILTON** and cornettist **WARREN VACHÉ.** Music after nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Music for many kinds of people, including unreconstructed folkies, rock-and-roll fundamentalists, and members of the **JONATHAN RICHMAN** fan club. Richman is an oddball; his almost-rock songs are unpretentious, unironic, and funny, and his voice is a kind of goofy Everyman's—wobbly and full of surprises. He'll be here with his band, the **MODERN LOVERS,** on Saturday and Sunday, March 14-15. The rest of the lineup: Wednesdays and Friday, March 20, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Thursday, March 12, folk and blues guitarists **JOHN RENBOURN** and **STEFAN GROSSMAN;** Friday, March 13, Doug & the Slugs; and Saturday, March 21, jazz guitarist **JOHN SCOFIELD'S** band. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar: it has dark wood panelling, Type A conversationalists, and some very good pianists (who play the very beautiful concert grand that Paul Desmond bequeathed to the proprietor) and bassists. The duos: **JACK WILSON** and **BOOTS MALESON** through Saturday, March 14; **KENNY WERNER** and **RUFUS REID** on Sunday, March 15; and **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and **GEORGE MRAZ** starting Monday, March 16. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. Ethel Ennis sings here through Sunday, March 15, and starting Tuesday, March 17, the **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET** (altoists **JULIUS HEMPHILL** and **OLIVER LAKE,** tenorist **DAVID MURRAY,** and baritone **HAMIET BLUIETT**) will probably play some of its sumptuous arrangements of Ellington and Strayhorn as well as its own hard-swinging pieces. Mondays are reserved for the father-and-son guitar team of **BUCKY** and **JOHN PIZZARELLI.** Music from nine every night but Monday, when it begins at eight. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The soft-hued, dreamy murals in the Café Carlyle are by Marcel Vertès, and the music is by singer-pianist Buddy Greco and his quintet. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, Ludwig Bemelmans' rabbits perform everyday stunts on the walls and **BARBARA CARROLL** sings and plays the piano Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-forty-five.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The lissome **BETTY CARTER** will be in this velvet-and-mirror-walled music box, performing stirring vocal feats and striking dramatic poses, through Sunday, March 15. Starting Tuesday, March 17, guitarists **JOHN ABERCROMBIE** and **JACK WILKINS** and their trios share the working space. Mondays remain the property of guitarist, recording whiz, and raconteur **LES PAUL.** Music from eight Tuesdays through Sundays, and from nine on Mondays. Dining.

Freddy's, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—**SYLVIA SYMS** sings in this little Turtle Bay supper club Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A cathedral-size bar and restaurant where you can hear and see (but from the bar you may want to use binoculars) good pianists. The piano is in **MULGREW MILLER'S** young, powerful hands through Saturday, March 14, and starting Tuesday, March 17, it will belong to Andy Laverne. Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant, low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **JOANNE BRACKEEN,** a California-born pianist who seems to burrow into whatever she plays rather than float through it waving to bystanders, works with bassist **CECIL MC BEE** through Saturday, March 14. **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and **STEVE LA SPINA** take charge on Tuesday, March 17. Music from about nine-thirty.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof of this establishment; Texans like the reminders of home; and the musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. Thursday through Saturday, March 12-14, the **RADIATORS;** Monday, March 16, the Reckless Sleepers; Thursday, March 19, **DEUCE,** a jazz-funk group led by saxophonist **JEAN FINEBERG** and trumpeter **ELLEN SEELING;** and Friday, March 20, Roomful of Blues. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub, local to the well-dressed businessperson. **CARMEN MC RAE** sings here Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Closed Sundays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and, occasionally, of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. Thursday, March 12, the **GREGG ALLMAN** band, with blues titan **B. B. KING;** Friday, March 13, D.O.A.; Saturday, March 14, **DWIGHT YOAKAM,** a chip off the old rockabilly block; and Thursday and Friday, March 19-20, the great East L.A. band **LOS LOBOS.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Tropical-forest décor (including a larger-than-life parrot suspended above the bandstand) and head-swirling music from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and the U.S.A. Wednesday and Thursday, March 11-12, the **ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO;** Friday and Saturday, March 13-14, Grammacks International; Tuesday and Wednesday, March 17-18, Jamaican singer Eek-A-Mouse; and Thursday, March 19, Sugarloaf, a samba band. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—According to Pliny the Elder, sweet basil mixed with rose oil and vinegar and applied as a liniment relieves headache and fatigue. No ailment-specific claim can be made for the quartet composed of **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI** (piano), **JIM HALL** (guitar), **RON CARTER** (bass), and **AL FOSTER** (drums), but something like wellness may overtake you during one of their sets. The group plays every night but Monday, when **GIL EVANS'** shimmering, electrified orchestra holds forth. Music from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple basic blues and rock club, now a venerable ten years old. Wednesday, March 11, **ELLIOTT MURPHY;** Friday and Saturday, March 13-14, San Francisco bluesman Joe Louis Walker; Tuesday, March 17, a St. Patrick's Day celebration, with protean lounge singer **BUSTER O'POINDEXTER;** Wednesday, March 18, Terrance Simien & the Mallet Playboys, a zydeco band; and Friday and Saturday, March 20-21, rockabilly singer Kristi Rose & the Dying Breed. Shows after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Peppy salsa bands play for their excitable fans in the gym-size downstairs room on Mondays after nine. On March 16, flugelhornist **ART FARMER** will take a solo turn or two with **JOSÉ ALBERTO'S** orchestra and Frankie Ruiz's ensemble. Dancing under the spinning mirrored ball. . . . ¶ The Terrace Bar features a little fireplace, in which little urban fires sometimes burn, and reliable—sometimes incandescent—piano-bass teams. Driving pianist **HILTON RUIZ** and buzzing bassist **MAJOR HOLLEY** will be on duty through Sunday, March 15, and on Tuesday, March 17, **MIKE LONGO** and Ben Brown move in. Music from around ten.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Tenor saxophonist **ILLINOIS JACQUET,** whose name alone suggests coattails flying, will be out in front of his mighty sixteen-piece swing band through Sunday, March 15, and on Tuesday, March 17, hard-bop tenorist **GEORGE COLEMAN** descends the stairs with his quartet. Mondays are Blast Off Nights for the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA.** Music from ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines and the jukebox is a room full of jazz and comedy. Trumpeter Richie Vitale leads a quartet through Sunday, March 15, and on Wednesday, March 18, cool Canadian vibraphonist **WARREN CHIASSON** arrives with his foursome. On Mondays, comedians do whatever comes into their wacky little heads. Shows from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** engage in lively piano-bass duets through Saturday, March 14, and on Monday, March 16, pianist **LARRY VUCKOVICH** and bassist **LISLE ATKINSON** go to work. On Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** play quietly fervent, highly melodic, room-stilling jazz. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Highlights in Jazz—A tribute to Maxine Sullivan, with Miss Sullivan, Milt Hinton, Doc Cheatham, Warren Vaché, and others. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Thursday, March 12, at 8.)

Bill Cosby—The first six of eleven performances. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Friday and Saturday, March 13-14, at 8 and 11:30, and Sunday, March 15, at 3 and 8.)

Mojtaba Khoshzamir—Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Sunday, March 15, at 2:30. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.

David Murray—In a program of his own works, with a fourteen-piece ensemble, conducted by Butch Morris. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Monday, March 16, at 8.)

Chieftains—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Tuesday, March 17, at 8.

Bob Goldthwait—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Thursday, March 19, at 8.

Hilton Ruiz Quartet—Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Friday, March 20, at 8.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Susan Crile—Recent abstract paintings, each spread out over several canvases, including a freestanding work resembling a folding screen. Through Saturday, March 21. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Chaim Gross—New sculptures, one set called "SoHo Girls," by an artist who, after more than twenty years, has returned to direct carving in wood. Through March 27. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Neil Jenney—New paintings that combine serial images, words, and frames. Through April 18. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Michael Lekakis—A retrospective of carved-wood sculptures. Through April 4. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

Sandra Mackintosh—Musical instruments inspired this group of eighteen highly polished painted-wood sculptures. Through April 4. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Roxi Marsen and Jane Swavely—Abstract paintings by each. Through March 28. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Kevin Moss—Paintings of a city street with the glow of dusk screening the grime of old snow and of huge refuse trucks exulting in their grime. Through Saturday, March 21. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Odd Nerdrum—Mystical paintings. Through March 28. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St.)

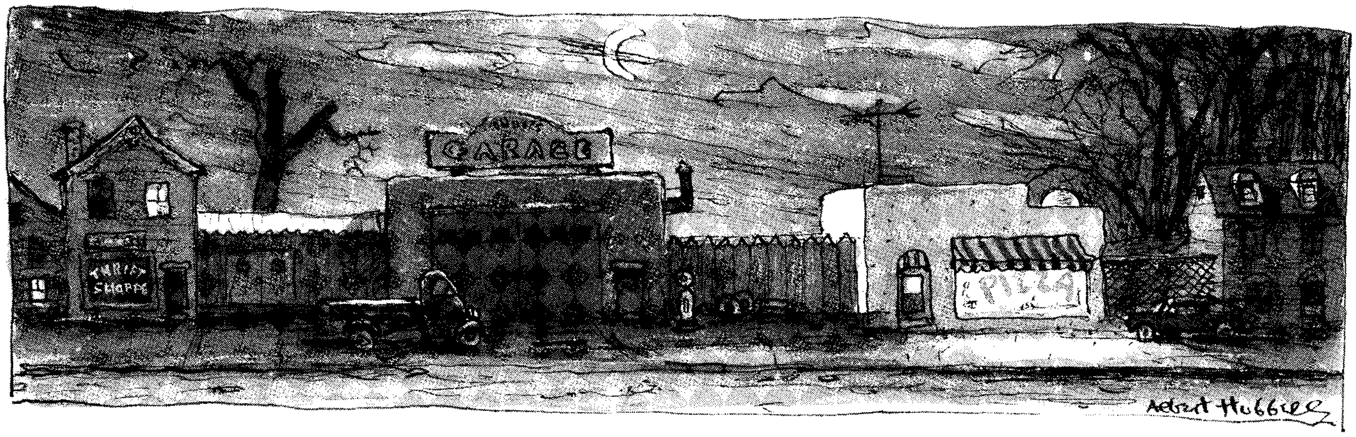
Pat Steir—New tondo paintings in a show that complements her exhibit at the New Museum. Through April 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Alan Turner—Symbolic paintings depicting eyes, noses, and other body parts out of their natural order. Through April 4. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

Donald Roller Wilson—Paintings. Through March 26. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Joe Zucker—A series of large new paintings with nautical subjects, which were realized through a heroic technique that involved applying paint to the individual squares of a cloth-and-sash-cord grid. Through March 28. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Group Shows—At the **ACA,** 21 E. 67th St.:



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Paintings, drawings, prints, and textiles by twenty-six of the founding members of the New York Society of Women Artists (1925). Through March 28. . . . **RACHEL ADLER,** 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Impressions (paintings and drawings) of New York and Vienna in the twenties by artists who had previously worked at the Vienna School of Applied Arts. Through Saturday, March 21.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Adele Alsop—Plein-air paintings executed in Massachusetts and Utah. Through March 28. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Arneson / James McGarrell—Two new series of sculptures in ceramic and in bronze—one on Jackson Pollock, the other on Ronald Reagan. Drawings, also. / Figurative paintings, and monoprints. Through April 2. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

Alice Dalton Brown / David Hendricks—Realist paintings of porches on turn-of-the-century houses. / Colored-pencil drawings of landscapes with big-sky features. Through March 25. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Herman Cherry—Recent abstract paintings. Through April 4. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St.)

Daniel Dallmann—Landscape and figure paintings. Through April 1. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

David Dewey—Realist watercolors of houses seen in the glare of sunlight and from the perspective of one looking up at the third story. Through March 28. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Judith Dolnick / Howard Newman—Recent paintings and folding screens. Through March 28. / Four bronze sculptures verging on the figurative. Through Saturday, March 21. (Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Jeanne Duval and Leigh Palmer—Two still-life painters, the former a traditionalist who depicts household objects in her home in Rome, the latter a realist whose palette and subjects are indicative of New England and New Mexico. Through April 4. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Friedel Dzubas—New color-field paintings. Through March 28. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Pablo Gargallo (1881-1934)—Portrait sculptures, radical in their day, by a Spaniard whose work has rarely been shown here. Bronze and copper were his main materials. Through April 4. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

Edward Giobbi—Figurative paintings from the past three decades. Through April 1. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Al Held—Large abstract geometric paintings from 1959. Through March 28. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Clinton Hill—Nonobjective handmade-paper works, painted-wood wall reliefs, and framed cut-plastic assemblages. Through April 11. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Wolf Kahn / Emily Mason—Landscapes in adventurous colors. / Abstract oils. Through April 1. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Michael Kessler—Paintings. Through March 28. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Hans Moller—Semi-abstract paintings of Monhegan, Maine, from a palette of brilliant colors. Through April 4. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Darragh Park—Representational paintings of cityscapes, landscapes, and figures. Through March 28. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Katherine Porter / David Hannah—Abstract monotypes and one large painting. / Abstract oils. Through March 28. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

Robert Rauschenberg—New works on paper. Through April 4. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Gerhard Richter—Abstract paintings. Through April 4. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays. . . . ¶ Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Lucas Samaras—Sculptures in the form of small chairs, composed of a variety of materials—wire covered with plastic flowers, for instance. Also, portrait drawings in ink on paper. Through Saturday, March 14. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

David Smith (1906-65)—Two shows (neither of sculptures). Twelve paintings from the thirties. Through March 28. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Thirty-six prints made between 1928 and 1954. Through Saturday, March 21. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Neil Welliver—New paintings. Through March 28. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Timothy Woodman—Painted-aluminum wall reliefs of genre scenes—"Bucket Brigade," for instance. Through April 4. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Phoebe Adams / Kevin Larmon—Bronzes. / Oils. Through April 1. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Nancy Azara—Carved-and-painted-wood sculptures. In "Seven Mansions" what appears to be a severed heart is held together by a twig and some string. Through Saturday, March 21. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Elvira Bach—Neo-Expressionist paintings of female figures. Through March 28. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Jennifer Bartlett—Recent pastels. Through Saturday, March 21. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

James Biederman / Charles Gaines—Large irregularly shaped canvases, some with bronze plates attached to them. / New conceptual work. Through March 28. (Weber, 142 Greene St. Mr. Gaines' work is also on view at the Castelli Gallery, same address.)

Gregory Botts—Black-and-white paintings of landscapes and figures, overlaid with colored geometric forms. Through March 28. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Carol Brown—Small colored-pencil drawings of Southwest landscapes. Through March 28. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

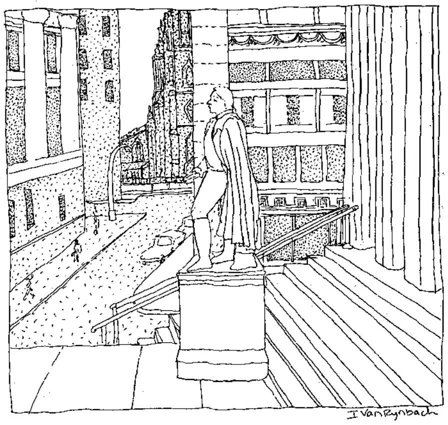
Howard Buchwald—Abstract paintings that have small geometric shapes cut out of the canvases. Through March 25. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Pierre Clerk—Painted-aluminum sculptures of interlocking geometric shapes, and trompe-l'oeil wall reliefs with the same shapes. Through March 28. (DiLaurenti, 383 West Broadway.)

Elba Damast—Abstract paintings and other works. Through March 28. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St.)

Anthony DeBlasi / Murray Alcosser—Wall works consisting entirely of individual sections of polymer shaped like brushstrokes. / Photographs. Through March 28. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Donna Dennis and Kenward Elmslie—An alphabet of imaginary drinking bars, from the Amazon to the Zanzibar, in twenty-six mixed-medium drawings. Through Saturday, March 21. (Green, 152 Wooster St.)



Norris Embry (1921-81)—Late-career paintings and drawings on paper by an Expressionist. Through March 28. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

Jean Feinberg—New abstract oils. Through March 28. (Davis, 568 Broadway.)

R. M. Fischer—Seven new lamp sculptures that are housed in important-looking stainless-steel machinery. Through April 4. (Baskerville+Watson, 578 Broadway.)

Louise Kramer—New sculptures and drawings that document the hanging of four women in Auschwitz. Through March 28. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

Ronnie Landfield—Abstract acrylic paintings. Through Saturday, March 14. (Haller, 415 West Broadway.)

Thomas Lawson—The themes the artist is addressing are summed up in a large canvas, "The Party's Over," which shows, in seven sections, views of New York, a perfume ad, a breadline, a Yuppie in a tuxedo. Through Saturday, March 21. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Donald Lipski—Sculptural installations, among them a large water-filled glass work. Through March 28. (Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Thomas Macaulay—A sculptural installation staking out two- and three-dimensional space with paper, tape, and pins. Through April 11. (Twining, 568 Broadway. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Brice Marden—New paintings. Through March 28. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Kate Millett—Drawings and sculptures that refer to two periods when the artist was a patient in psychiatric hospitals. Through March 29. (NoHo, 168 Mercer St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Nic Nicosia—The artist's version of "Life As We Know It," illustrated with Cibachrome prints and with a soundtrack by Dave Hickey and Mike Wafer. Also, drawings. Through March 26. (Totah, 152 Wooster St.)

Peter Reginato—Abstract painted-steel sculptures. Through March 28. (112 Greene Street Gallery.)

Edith Schloss / Peter Kunz Opfersei—A small retrospective of watercolors and oils. / Works on paper. Through April 4. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Tod Wizon—Surreal landscapes. Through March 31. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Group Shows—At **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 35 Wooster St.: Works on paper by eight artists. Through Saturday, March 21. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **GIBSON,** 568 Broadway: Abstract paintings by Alan Uglow, Susan Smith, Stephen Rosenthal, and Nancy Haynes. Through Saturday, March 14. . . . **GLADSTONE,** 99 Greene St.: Paintings and sculptures by five Arte Povera artists—Alighiero Boetti, Luciano Fabro, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Jannis Kounellis, and Mario Merz. Through March 28. . . . **THORP,** 103 Prince St.: Marble sculptures by Philip Pavia, from the past three decades, and abstract paintings by Robert Ackerman and Paul Mogensen. Through April 4.

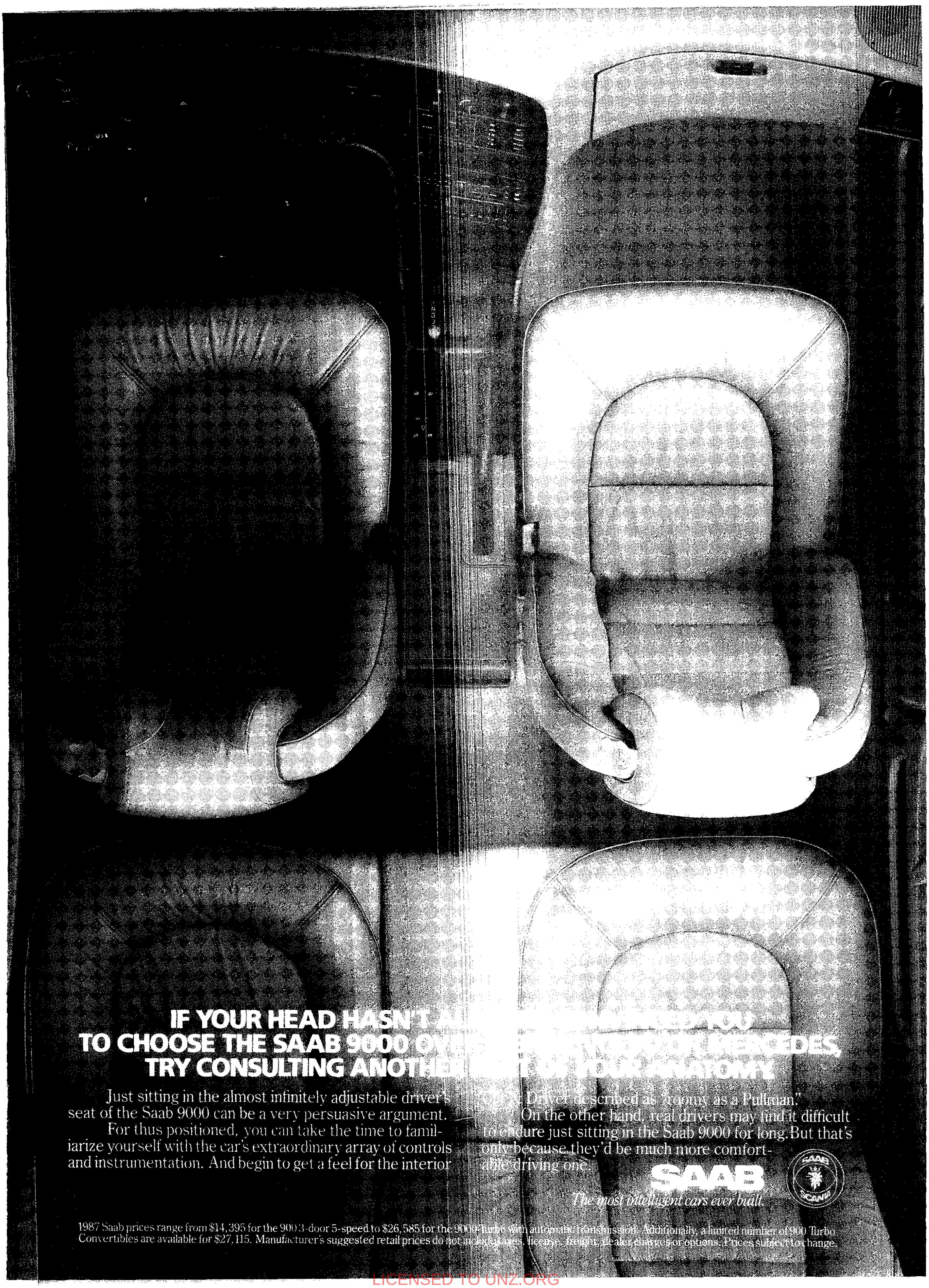
OTHER GALLERIES

Vito Acconci—Three sculptural works, among them a metal-and-concrete tunnel (with grass above) that the intrepid can crawl through or walk over. Through March 22. (International with Monument, 111 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Hanno Ahrens—Geometric wood-and-plaster sculptures. Through Sunday, March 15. (Sharpe, 175 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at 1.)

Mike Howard—Didactic statements on contemporary life conveyed in a series of paintings on attached canvases. Through March 22. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . ¶ More paintings by Mr. Howard at Art & Exhibit, 1619 Broadway, at 49th St., Suite 550. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Stephanie Brody Lederman—Pictographic draw-



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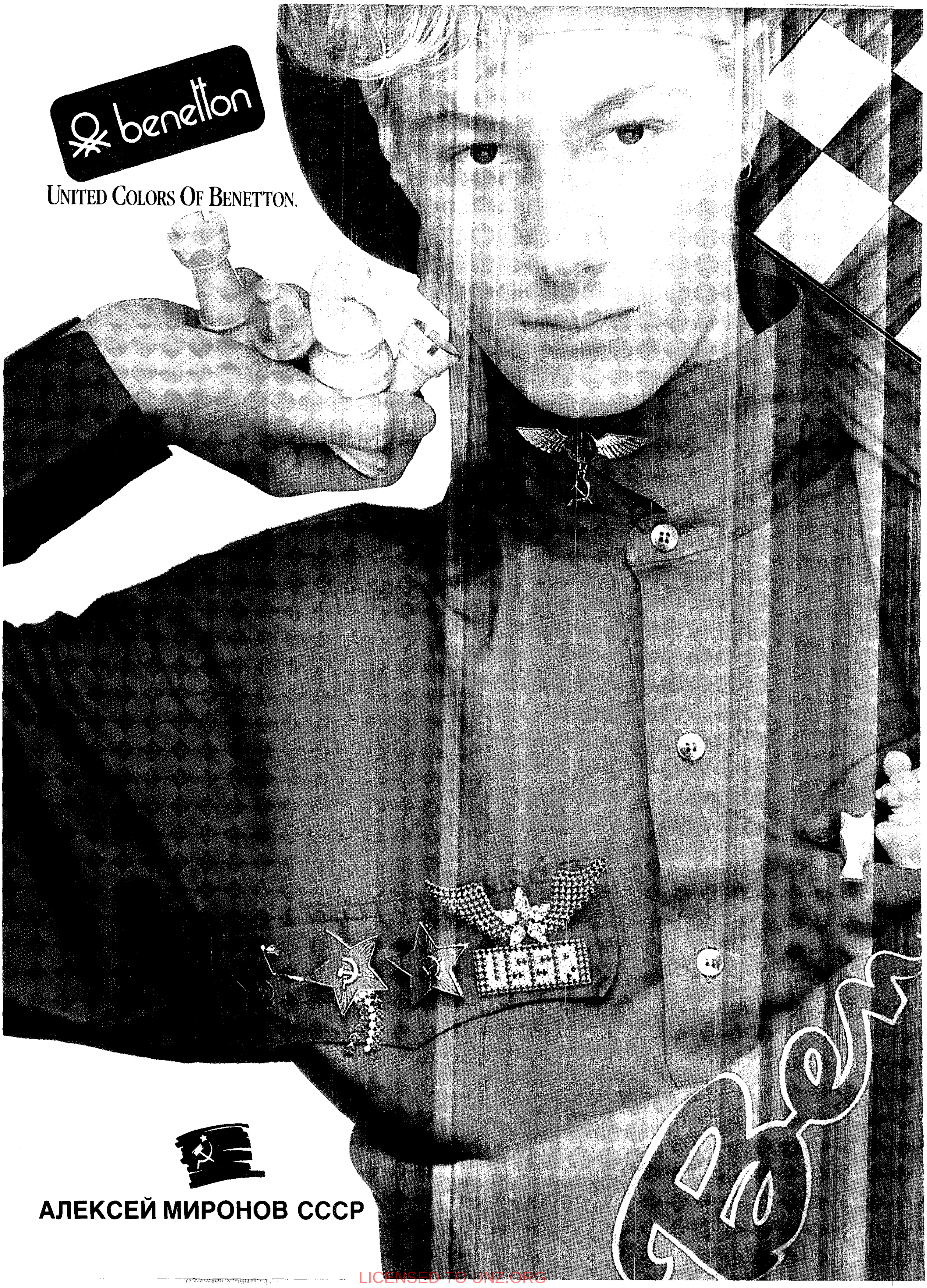
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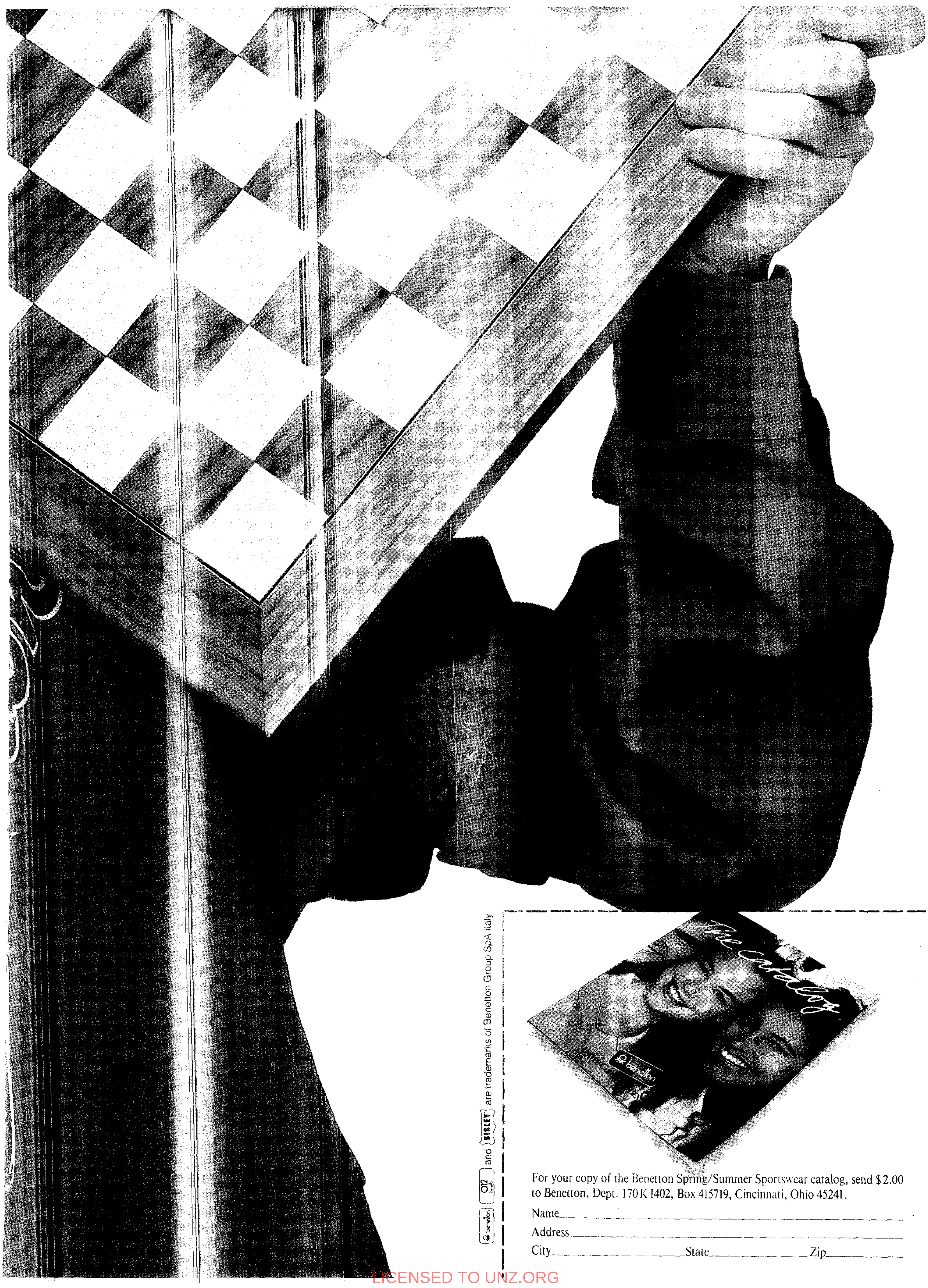

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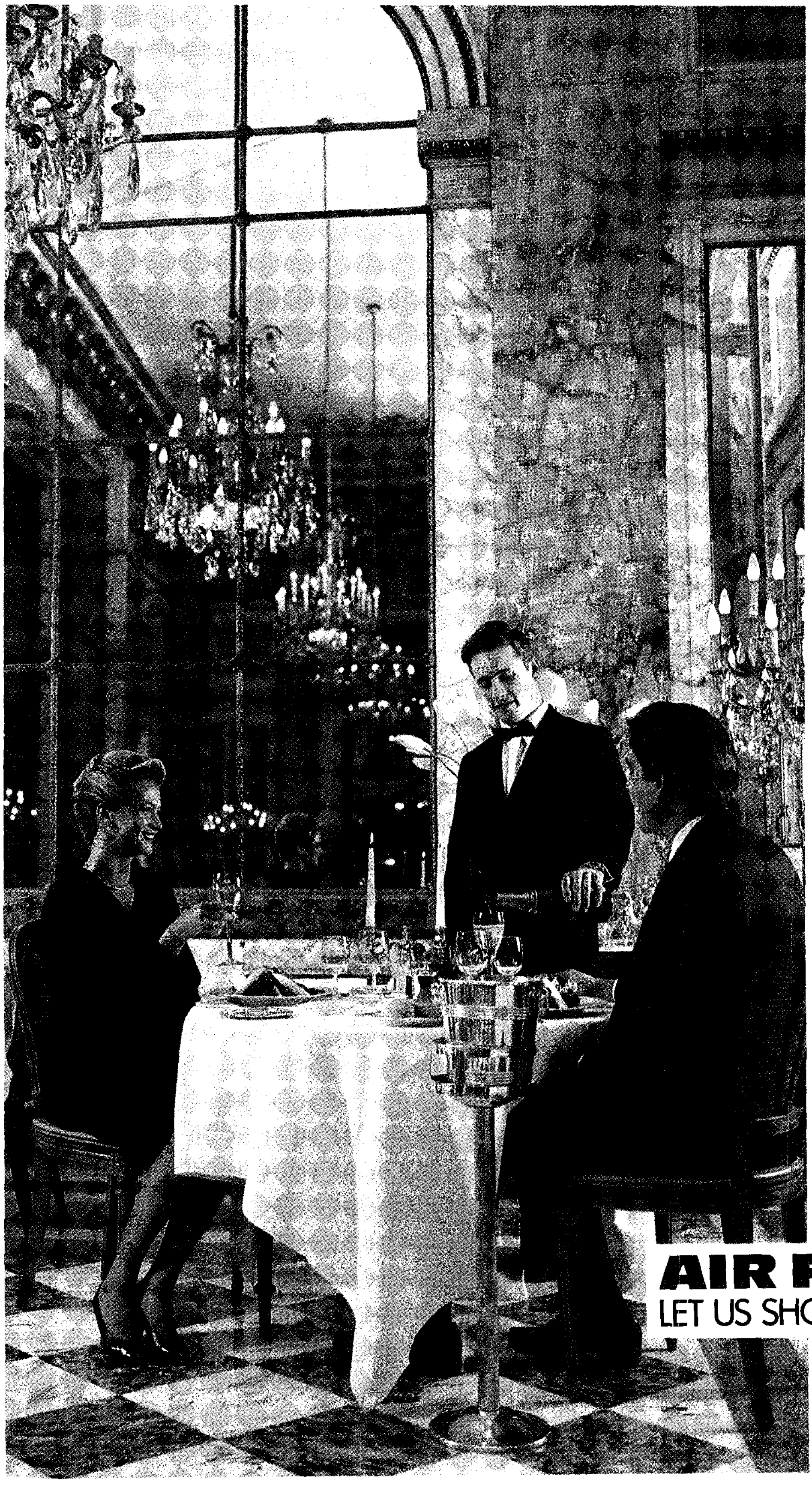

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ings and collages. Through March 29. (Rastovski, 534 E. 6th St., between Avenues A and B. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Gregory Perkel—Abstract and figurative paintings and wall constructions by a Russian artist who has lived here ten years. Through Sunday, March 15. (Mokotoff, 735 E. 9th St., just west of Avenue D. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Deborah Remington—Recent abstract paintings. Through April 5. (Shainman, 500 E. 11th St., near Avenue A. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Keith Sonnier—Four works from the sixties, among them neon and incandescent-light sculptures, plus studies. Through March 29. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Ruth Bernhard / Ellen Carey—Gelatin-silver prints of female nudes; the prints were made recently from the original negatives, dated 1934-76. / Photographs with paint and collage additions. Through April 19. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Marilyn Bridges—Aerial photographs of ancient land markings—the Nazca lines, Yucatán ruins, and so forth. Through April 11. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at noon.)

Robert Capa (1913-54)—Photographs of Berlin in the summer of 1945. Through April 4. (Goethe House, 1014 Fifth Ave., at 83rd St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Jan Groover—A retrospective show of eighty photographs is at the Museum of Modern Art. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Jacques Henri Lartigue (1894-1986)—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a show devoted to this photographer, entitled "Panoramas of the Twenties." See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Gordon Parks—A retrospective of more than two hundred prints by this photojournalist. Through March 28. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ Fifty prints made for the Farm Security Administration. Through March 28. (Schomburg Center, 515 Lenox Ave., at 135th St. Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Lenore Seroka—Photographs of artists in their studios. Through March 31. (4th Street Photo, 67 E. 4th St. Sundays through Thursdays, 2 to 8; Fridays and Saturdays, 3 to 10.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers," a show of paintings and drawings covering the artist's last fifteen months. Through March 22. . . . ¶ The library of an 1859 Gothic Revival house designed by Frederick Clarke Withers has been installed among the period rooms in the American Wing. Starts Thursday, March 12. . . . ¶ "Dance" is the title of the Costume Institute's show of men's and women's evening dress and accessories. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A survey of Roy Lichtenstein's drawings. Starts Sunday, March 15. . . . ¶ A retrospective show of works by Paul Klee. Through May 5. . . . ¶ A monumental tilted chair and a massive stairway, both made of rough-hewn oak, mark the American début of Magdalena Jetelová, a Czech sculptor who recently moved to West Germany. Starts Saturday, March 14. . . . **photography:** Prints by Jacques Henri Lartigue. Through March 24. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the work of Jan Groover. Through June 2. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—An exhibit of paintings, drawings, and prints by the Belgian artist Pierre Alechinsky which chronicles his use of sketches in the borders of his works. Mr. Alechinsky has taken this border motif one step further by painting a rising sun around the museum's elevator entrances. . . . ¶ About sixty works that were either first shown by Peggy Guggenheim at her gallery Art of This Century (open from 1942 to 1947) or were donated by her to American museums, in an effort to promote the avant-garde of her time. There are works by Jackson Pollock, David Hare, and Matta that haven't been seen here since the forties. Both shows through May 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of paintings by David Salle, spanning the past eight years. Through March 29. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by John Storrs, an early modernist sculptor, containing, in addition to sculptures, his paintings, drawings, and prints. Through March 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Sculptures by Peter Gourfain, including "Roundabout," a huge wheel-shaped construction incorporating clay, bronze, and wood relief which was nearly a decade in the making. Also, paintings and drawings. Starts Friday, March 13. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A three-inch-tall frog carved in jet, with turquoise eyes and a turquoise collar, is the centerpiece of a show of two hundred Pueblo artifacts. The frog was found at the turn of the century in a ceremonial chamber of the seven-hundred-room Pueblo Bonito, in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—An exhibit of paintings and sculptures by twenty-eight contemporary American artists who are candidates for the Academy-Institute's art awards. Through March 29. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Handmade fine- and applied-art objects in a blazing show that befits a new home for this museum. Through March 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The accomplishments of the architect Antoni Gaudí (1852-1926), seen in the context of the work of his peers in Barcelona, are the focus of an exhibit of architectural drawings, furniture, tiles, metalwork, and glass objects. Through June 9. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"The Age of Bruegel: Netherlandish Drawings of the Sixteenth Century," a selection built around the work of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Eight of the drawings are by him, the others by artists who influenced him (Bosch, for instance) and whom he influenced (Roelandt Savery). Through April 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—An installation by Pat Steir for which she has painted large-scale studies of human features—eyes, lips, noses—directly on the walls. Through April 12. A complementary show of paintings is at M. Knoedler & Co., 19 E. 70th St. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays, noon to 10; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Harlem Renaissance: Art of Black America," a show of two hundred paintings, sculptures, photographs, and prints, nearly all of them by five pivotal artists of the twenties—Aaron Douglas, William H. Johnson, Palmer Hayden, Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller, and James Van DerZee. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

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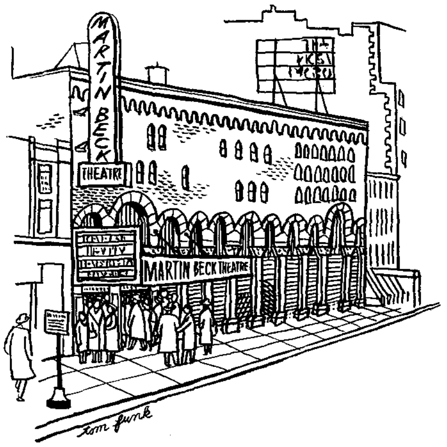


ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077—Ain Gordon and ensemble (theatre), Thursdays through Saturdays, March 12-14 and 19-21, and Wednesday, March 18, at 8; afternoon performances Sundays, March 15 and 22, at 3. . . . ¶ Joelle Ballonzoli (dance), Friday and Saturday, March 20-21, at 11.

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Steve Paxton (dance), Thursday through Sunday, March 19-22, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Ethyl Eichelberger (performance), Fridays, March 13 and 20, at 10; Saturdays and Sundays, March 14-15 and 21-22, at 8. . . . ¶ Tamar Rogoff (dance), Friday and Saturday, March 13-14, at 8 and 10; Sunday, March 15, at 8. . . . ¶ Kaja Gam and Awkward Dance (dance), Friday through Sunday, March 20-22, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, March 11, at 8: "Carmen," with Agnes Baltsa, Ileana Cotrubas, José Carreras, and Samuel Ramey; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 12, at 8: A new production of Puccini's "Turandot," with Eva Marton, Leona Mitchell, Placido Domingo, Hugues Cuénod, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (A benefit performance.) . . . ¶ Friday, March 13, at 8: "Manon," with Diana Soviero, David Holloway, and Julien Robbins; Manuel Rosenthal. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 14, at 1:30: "Boris Godunov," with Stefka Mineva, Vladimir Popov, Robert Nagy, Martti Talvela, and Paul Plishka; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 14, at 8: "Carmen," with Agnes Baltsa, Ileana Cotrubas, José Carreras, and Gregg Baker; James Levine. . . . ¶ Monday, March 16, at 8: "Manon," with Catherine Malfitano, Neil Shicoff, David Holloway, and Julien Robbins; Manuel Rosenthal. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 17, at 8: "Turandot," with Eva Marton, Leona Mitchell, Placido Domingo, Hugues Cuénod, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 18, at 8: "Carmen," with Agnes Baltsa, Ileana Cotrubas, José Carreras, and Gregg Baker; James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 19, at 8: "Boris Godunov," with Cleopatra Ciurca, Misha Raitzin, Thomas Booth, Paul Plishka, and Sergei Koptchak; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Friday, March 20, at 8: "Turandot," with Eva Marton, Leona Mitchell, Placido Domingo, Hugues Cuénod, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 21, at 1:30: "Carmen," with Agnes Baltsa, Ileana Cotrubas, José Carreras, and Samuel Ramey; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 21, at 8: "Dialogues of the Carmelites" (*in English*), with Maria Ewing, Jessye Norman, and Régine Crespin; Manuel Rosenthal. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Vineyard Opera Shop—James Kurtz conducting the American première of Giuseppe Sarti's 1782 opera, "Fra Due *Litiganti* il Terzo Gode." Directed by Joseph LoSchiavo. (309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, April 5.)

Opera Ensemble of New York—Jonathan Tunick *conducting the final performances of* "Christopher Columbus," a comic opera by Don White, with a score compiled from music by Jacques Offenbach. Staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesday, March 11, and Friday, March 13, at 8, and Sunday, March 15, at 3. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "Madame Butterfly." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Friday, March 13, and Saturdays, March 14 and 21, at 7:30.)

Concert Royal and the New York Baroque Dance Company—James Richman conducting two one-act opera-ballets: Rameau's "Pygmalion" and Handel's "Terpsicore." Directed by John Haber. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Wednesday through Saturday, March 18-21, at 8. For information about tickets, call 279-4200.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Mstislav Rostropovich conducting—Thursday through Saturday, March 12-14, at 8, and Tuesday, March 17, at 7:30: A Prokofiev-Tchaikovsky program; no soloists. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, March 19-21, and Tuesday, March 24, at 8: Britten's "War Requiem," with Galina Vishnevskaya, soprano; Anthony Rolfe-Johnson, tenor; John Shirley-Quirk, baritone; the Westminster Choir; and the Brooklyn Boys Chorus.

Vienna Philharmonic—Claudio Abbado conducting the final two in a series of all-Beethoven programs—Thursday, March 12: Symphony No. 4; Piano Concert No. 5, with Maurizio Pollini as soloist; and the "Leonore" Overture No. 3. . . . ¶ Friday, March 13: Symphony No. 8, and Symphony No. 9, with *Susan Dunn, soprano;* Tatiana Troyanos, mezzo-soprano; Jerry Hadley, tenor; Laszlo Polgar, bass-baritone; and the Westminster Choir. (Carnegie Hall. Evenings at 8.)

Swedish National Orchestra of Gothenberg—Neeme Järvi conducting, with Henryk Szeryng, *violin.* (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 3.)

Orchestre National de France—Lorin Maazel conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 20, at 8.)

Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal—Charles Dutoit conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 21, at 8: With Anne-Sophie Mutter, violin. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 22, at 3: With Yo-Yo Ma, cello.)

Orpheus—With Elly Ameling, soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 14, at 8.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Andrew Litton conducting, with Andrés Díaz, cello. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 3.)

West Texas State University Symphonic Band—Gary Garner conducting, with Eddie Daniels, clarinet. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, March 16, at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi—Richard Kapp conducting a program of baroque music. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, March 17, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting the third in a series of "Meet the Moderns" programs, this one devoted to music by West Coast *composers. (Brooklyn Academy of* Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. Thursday, March 19, at 8. . . . ¶ Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, March 20, at 8.) For information about tickets, call 1-718 636-4120.

***Dessoff Choirs**—Amy Kaiser directing, with* John Aler, tenor; Ida Kavafian, violin; and Elizabeth Rodgers, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 8.)

Bach's Mass in B Minor—Paul Halley directing the Massed Choirs of the Cathedral. With soloists and an orchestra. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Saturday, March 14, at 7:30.)

Musica Sacra—Richard Westenburg directing the chorus and orchestra in a performance of Haydn's "The Seasons," with Costanza Cuccaro, soprano; David Gordon, tenor; and Kevin McMillan, baritone. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, March 18, at 7:30.)

RECITALS

Music from Marlboro—Two performances of the same program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Thursday, March 12, at 8. . . . ¶ Alice Tully Hall. Monday, March 16, at 8.)

Carlos Prieto—Cello, with Doris Stevenson, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, March 13, at 8.)

Kronos Quartet—A program of contemporary string quartets. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, March 13, at 8.)

Composers' Forum—At Weill Recital Hall, presenting two programs of chamber music by Ornette Coleman, both of which will include "Time Design," a work for amplified string quartet and electric drums—Saturday, March 14, at 8:30: With Andy Statman, mandolin; an ensemble, Joseph Celli conducting; and others. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 15, at 8:30: *With the Kronos Quartet; Mr. Celli, oboe;* and others.

Henryk Szeryng—Violin. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 14, at 8.)

Michala Petri Duo—Miss Petri, recorder, and Hanne Petri, harpsichord. (Veléz Blanco Patio, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949. Saturday, March 14, at 8.)

Luydmila Sandovskaya—Piano, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 3.)

***Guarneri Quartet**—*Two programs of chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 3; no guest artists. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 18, at 8, with David Shifrin, clarinet, and John Browning, piano.)

Mstislav Rostropovich—The last in a series of concerts of Bach suites for unaccompanied cello. (Grace Church, Broadway at 10th St. Sunday, March 15, at 3. A benefit concert; for information about tickets, call 841-9633.)

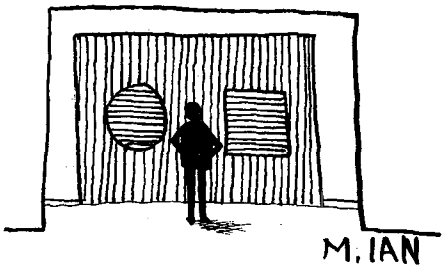
James Galway—Flute, in a joint recital with Kazuhito Yamashita, guitar. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 7:30.)

Richard Stoltzman—Clarinet, with assisting artists. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 15, at 8.)

Xavier Gagnepain and Martine Gagnepain—Cello and piano. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Monday, March 16, at 8.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—In a varied program that includes "Just Time" (New York première), by Martin Bresnick. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, March 16, at 8.)

North/South Consonance Ensemble—Max Lifchitz conducting a program of new works by composers from Southern California, with Beverly Ogdon, soprano, and Delores Stevens, piano. (St. Stephen's Church, 122 W. 69th St. Monday, March 16, at 8. Tickets at the door *on the night of the concert.)*



Joseph Breznikar—Guitar. (92nd Street Y. Tuesday, March 17, at 8.)

Joseph Porrello—Tenor, in a tribute to Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears; with Kenneth Merrill, piano, and Susan Jolles, harp. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Tuesday, March 17, at 8. For information about tickets, call 741-5690.)

William Moersch, Leigh Howard Stevens, and Gordon Stout—A concert of marimba music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, March 17, at 8.)

Amadeus Quartet—With Bruno Canino, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 18, at 8.)

Joel Krosnick and Gilbert Kalish—In a program of cello-and-piano sonatas by Beethoven and by George *Perle. (Merkin* Concert Hall. Wednesday, March 18, at 8.)

The Art of the Early Keyboard—The third in a series of four concerts featuring Gwendolyn Toth, organ and harpsicord, and guest artists Jennifer Lane, mezzo-soprano; Drew Minter, *countertenor;* Frederick Urrey, tenor; Adam Gilbert, recorder; and Lisa Terry, viola da gamba. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Wednesday, March 18, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Alicia de Larrocha—Playing piano music by Schumann. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 19, at 8.)

Richard Goode—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Thursday, March 19, at 8.)

Parnassus—With assisting instrumentalists, performing the première of "Commedia," by Matthew Greenbaum, and works by Elliott Carter and George Perle. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, March 19, at 8.)

London Early Music Group—A program of seventeenth-century love songs. (Weill Recital Hall. Friday, March 20, at 8.)

Beaux Arts Trio—Two performances of the same program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday and Saturday, March 20-21, at 8.)

Spoleto Festival Chamber Music at BAM—Paula *Robison, flute; Frank Morelli,* bassoon; and a ten-member ensemble. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, March 21, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Milwaukee Bucks, Thursday, March 12, at 7:30, and Cleveland Cavaliers, Tuesday, March 17, at 7:30. . . . **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Nets, Friday, March 13; Denver Nuggets, Tuesday, March 17; Indiana Pacers, Thursday, March 19; and Atlanta Hawks, Saturday, March 21. (Games begin at 7:30.)

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Boston Bruins, Wednesday, March 11, at 7:35; Philadelphia Flyers, Sunday, March 15, at 7:35; and Hartford Whalers, Wednesday, March 18, at 7:35. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, March 11, at 7:35, and Islanders, Friday, March 13, at 7:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Devils, Saturday, March 14, at 7:05, and Rangers, Saturday, March 21, at 7:05.

Karate—All-American Open Karate Championships. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 21, at 8.)

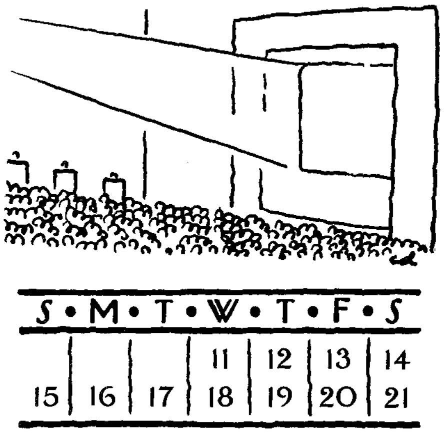
ET ALIA

Prose Readings—William Maxwell reading from his own works. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Tuesday, March 17, at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Flower Show—The New York Flower Show, sponsored by the Horticultural Society of New York, features a city shade garden, a Chinese garden, and an Italian Riviera garden among its displays. (New York City Passenger Ship Terminal, Pier 90, Twelfth Ave. at 50th St. Daily, 10 to 5; through Sunday, March 15.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 23.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through March 12: At 6, "La Salamandre" (1971; directed by Alain Tanner; in French), with Bulle Ogier, Jean-Luc Bideau, and Jacques Denis; at 8:15, "No End" (1984; Krzysztof Kieslowski; in Polish); and, at 10, "La Chinoise" (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French).
March 13: At 6, "Six in Paris" (1965; Jean-Luc Godard, Jean Rouch, Jean-Daniel Pollet, Claude Chabrol, Eric Rohmer, and Jean Douchet; in French); at 8, "Everything for Sale" (1968; Andrzej Wajda; in Polish); and, at 10, "Partner" (1969; Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Pierre Clémenti, Stefania Sandrelli, and Tina Aumont.
March 14-15: At 4, "The Stud Farm" (1982; András Kovács; in Hungarian); at 6, "Six in Paris;" at 8, "Everything for Sale;" and, at 10, "Partner."
March 17-19: At 6, "Gods of the Plague" (1969; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Harry Baer and Hanna Schygulla; at 8, "Everything for Sale;" and, at 10, "Socrates" (1970; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian).
From March 20: At 6:15, "Stroszek" (1977; Werner Herzog; in German and English), with Bruno S. and Eva Mattes; at 8, "Graduate First" (1979; Maurice Pialat; in French); and, at 10, "The Left-Handed Woman" (†).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Angel Heart" (Alan Parker), with Mickey Rourke, Robert De Niro, Lisa Bonet, and Charlotte Rampling.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle. From March 13: "Lethal Weapon" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 3: "Lethal Weapon."

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through March 19: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).
From March 20: "Raising Arizona" (Joel Coen), with Nicolas Cage and Holly Hunter.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Some Kind of Wonderful" (Howard Deutch), with Eric Stoltz, Mary Stuart Masterson, Craig Sheffer, and Lea Thompson.
Theatre 2: "Radio Days" (†).
Theatre 3: "Platoon" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through March 12: "Black Widow" (1987 †).
From March 13: "Heat" (R. M. Richards), with Burt Reynolds.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through March 12: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).
From March 13: "Blue Velvet" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Black Widow" (1987 †).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through March 12: "Mannequin" (Michael Gottlieb), with Andrew McCarthy and Kim Cattrall.
From March 13: "Heat" (R. M. Richards), with Burt Reynolds.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through March 12: "The Morning After" (†).
From March 13: To be announced.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "84 Charing Cross Road" (David Jones), with Anne Bancroft and Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 2: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).

D.W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Round Midnight" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through March 12: "Duet for One" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Julie Andrews, Alan Bates, and Max von Sydow. From March 13: "Man Facing Southeast" (Eliseo Subiela; an Argentine film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Tin Men" (Barry Levinson), with Richard Dreyfuss, Danny DeVito, and Barbara Hershey.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Beyond Therapy" (Robert Altman), with Jeff Goldblum, Julie Hagerty, Tom Conti, and Glenda Jackson.
Theatre 2: "Hoosiers" (David Anspaugh), with Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, and Dennis Hopper.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Raising Arizona" (Joel Coen), with Nicolas Cage and Holly Hunter.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Radio Days" (†).
Theatre 2: "Platoon" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Good Father" (Mike Newell), with Anthony Hopkins.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Angel Heart" (Alan Parker), with Mickey Rourke, Robert De Niro, Lisa Bonet, and Charlotte Rampling.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Hoosiers" (David Anspaugh), with Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, and Dennis Hopper.

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Lethal Weapon." From March 13: "Witchboard" (Kevin S. Tenney).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Some Kind of Wonderful" (Howard Deutch), with Eric Stoltz, Mary Stuart Masterson, Craig Sheffer, and Lea Thompson.
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 3: Dream Warriors" (Chuck Russell).

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through March 19: "Black Widow" (1987 †).
From March 20: "Hollywood Shuffle" (Robert Townsend), with Townsend.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through March 17: "Broken Mirrors" (1984; directed by Marleen Gorris; in Dutch). From March 18: "Reichsautobahn" (1985; Hartmut Bitomsky; in German), a documentary.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "The Sacrifice" (Andrei Tarkovsky; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson. March 13-19: "Summer" (Eric Rohmer; in French), with Marie Rivière; and "Pauline at the Beach" (1982; Eric Rohmer; in French). From March 20: "Ran" (1985; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "A.K." (1985; Chris Marker; in English and Japanese), a documentary about the making of "Ran."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through March 12: "Lily Tomlin" (Nicholas Broomfield and Joan Churchill), a documentary. From March 13: "Animation Celebration," a film comprising twenty-two films from seven countries.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Something Wild" (Jonathan Demme), with Jeff Daniels and Melanie Griffith. From March 13: "Lily Tomlin."

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through March 12: "Blue Velvet" (†). From March 13: "Heat" (R. M. Richards), with Burt Reynolds.
Theatre 2: "Tin Men" (Barry Levinson), with Richard Dreyfuss, Danny DeVito, and Barbara Hershey.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through March 12: "Beyond Therapy" (Robert Altman), with Jeff Goldblum, Julie Hagerty, Tom Conti, and Glenda Jackson.
From March 13: "Round Midnight" (†).

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through March 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†). From March 13: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Little Shop of Horrors" (1986 †).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Mona Lisa" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†). March 13-19: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From March 20: "Hollywood Shuffle" (Robert Townsend), with Townsend.
Theatre 3: "A Room with a View" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 12: "My Sweet Little Village" (Jiří Menzel; a Czech film). From March 13: "Blue Velvet" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).
Theatre 2: "Black Widow" (1987 †).
Theatre 3: "Hoosiers" (David Anspaugh), with Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, and Dennis Hopper.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through March 12: "Beyond Therapy" (Robert Altman), with Jeff Goldblum, Julie Hagerty, Tom Conti, and Glenda Jackson.
From March 13: "Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through March 12: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).
From March 13: "Heat" (R. M. Richards), with Burt Reynolds.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Working Girls" (Lizzie Borden).

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through March 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
From March 13: "Gospel According to Vic" (Charles Gormley), with Tom Conti.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through March 12: "Salvador" (1986; Oliver Stone), with James Woods and John Savage.
From March 13: "Kangaroo" (Tim Burstall), with Colin Friels and Judy Davis.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Decline of the American Empire" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Some Kind of Wonderful" (Howard Deutch), with Eric Stoltz, Mary Stuart Masterson, Craig Sheffer, and Lea Thompson.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Scene of the Crime" (André Té-

chiné; in French), with Catherine Deneuve.
Theatre 2: *Through March 12:* "Faces of Women" (Désiré Ecaré; in French). From March 13: "Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary.
Theatre 3: "Thérèse" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Waiting for the Moon" (Jill Godmilow), with Linda Hunt and Linda Bassett.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary. From March 13: "Swimming to Cambodia" (Jonathan Demme), *with Spalding Gray.*

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: Through March 19: "Black Widow" (1987 †). From March 20: "Raising Arizona" (Joel Coen), with Nicolas Cage and Holly Hunter.
Theatre 2: "A Room with a View" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Tin Men" (Barry Levinson), with Richard Dreyfuss, Danny DeVito, and Barbara Hershey.
Theatre 2: "Angel Heart" (Alan Parker), with Mickey Rourke, Robert De Niro, Lisa Bonet, and Charlotte Rampling.
Theatre 3: "Radio Days" (†).
Theatre 4: "Lethal Weapon" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 5: "Platoon" (†).
Theatre 6: "Hoosiers" (David Anspaugh), with Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, and Dennis Hopper.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; *in French*), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (†). From March 13: "Animation Celebration," a film comprising *twenty-two films from seven countries.*

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 12: (Separate admissions) "Sid and Nancy" (Alex Cox), with Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb; and "*Crimes of the Heart" (†). From March 13:* "Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn" (Sam Raimi).
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 3: Dream Warriors" (Chuck Russell).
Theatre 3: Through March 12: "Blue Velvet" (†). From March 13: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 12: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From March 13: "Witchboard" (Kevin S. Tenney).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: "Black Widow" (1987 †).
Theatre 3: "Lethal Weapon" (directed by Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.
Theatre 4: "Over the Top" (Menahem Golan), with Sylvester Stallone.

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Theatre 5: *Through March 12:* "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons. From March 13: To be announced.
Theatre 6: Through March 12: "The Morning After" (†). From March 13: To be announced.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
Through March 12: "Death Before Dishonor" (Terry Leonard), with Fred Dryer.
From March 13: "Tin Men" (Barry Levinson), with Richard Dreyfuss, Danny DeVito, and Barbara Hershey.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 3: Dream Warriors" (Chuck Russell).
Theatre 3: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 3: Dream Warriors."
Theatre 4: Through March 12: "Crocodile Dundee" (*Peter Faiman*), *with* Paul Hogan. From March 13: "Outrageous Fortune" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Platoon" (†).

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
Through March 12: "Little Shop of Horrors" (1986 †).
From March 13: "Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn" (Sam Raimi).

New Embassy 49th Street, 49th St. near Seventh Ave. (757-7003)
March 11: Theatre closed.
March 12: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
From March 13: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. (No performances on Tuesday, March 17.)

R.K.O. National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Mannequin" (Michael Gottlieb), with Andrew McCarthy and Kim Cattrall.
Theatre 2: "Angel Heart" (Alan Parker), with Mickey Rourke, Robert De Niro, Lisa Bonet, and Charlotte Rampling.

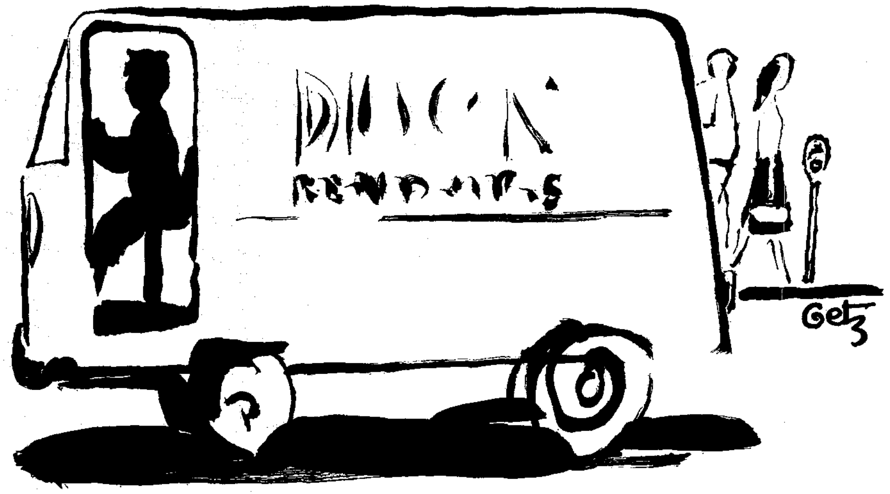
U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: "Hoosiers" (David Anspaugh), with Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey, and Dennis Hopper.
Theatre 2: Through March 12: "Rage of Honor." From March 13: To be announced.

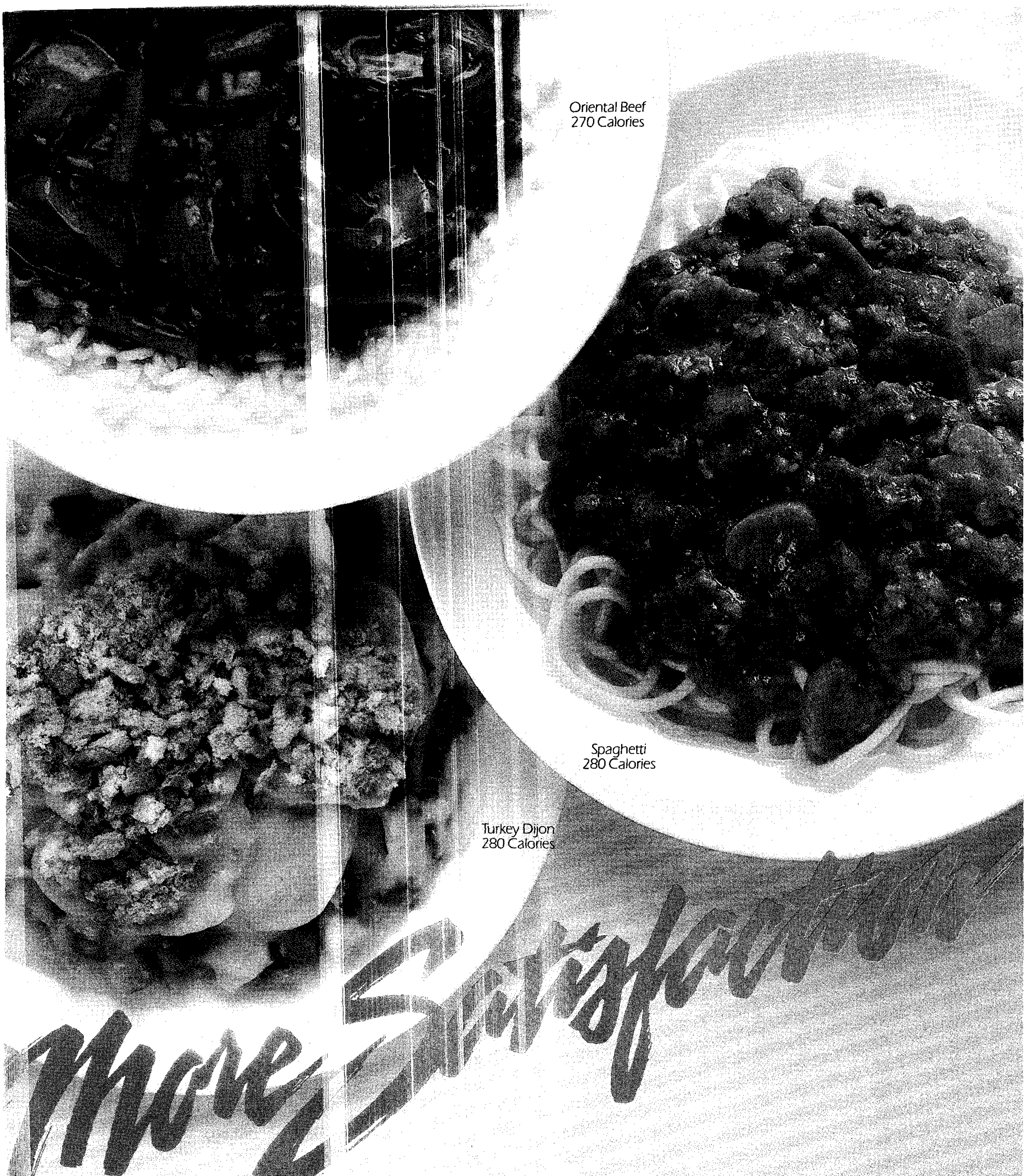
REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 12: "Once Upon a Time *in* the West" (1969; directed by Sergio Leone), with Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, and Jason Robards.
March 13-14: "Porky Pig in Hollywood," a program of sixteen black-and-white Warner Brothers cartoons, directed by Tex Avery, Friz Freleng, Bob Clampett, Frank Tashlin, and Chuck Jones.
March 15: "Gallipoli" (1981; Peter Weir), *with* Mel Gibson, Mark Lee, and Bill Kerr; and "Starstruck" (1982; Gillian Armstrong), with Jo Kennedy.
March 16-17: "The Tenant" (1976; Roman Polanski), with Polanski; and "Repulsion" (1965; Roman Polanski), with Catherine Deneuve, Ian Hendry, Yvonne Furneaux, and John Fraser.
March 18-19: "Manhunter" (1986; Michael Mann), with William L. Petersen; and "To Live and Die in L.A." (1985; William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe.
March 20-21: "Alien" (1979; Ridley Scott), with Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, and Veronica Cartwright; and "Aliens" (1986; James Cameron), with Sigourney Weaver.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through March 12: "Gentleman Jim" (1942; Raoul Walsh), with Errol Flynn, Alexis Smith, Alan Hale, and Ward Bond; and "White Heat" (1949; Raoul Walsh), with James Cagney, Virginia Mayo, Edmond O'Brien, and Margaret Wycherly.
March 13-15: "Sadie Thompson" (1928; Raoul Walsh; a silent film), with Gloria Swanson, Walsh, Lionel Barrymore, and Blanche Frederici; and "Strawberry Blonde" (1941; Raoul Walsh), with Olivia de Havilland, James Cagney, and Rita Hayworth.
March 16-17: "Going Hollywood" (†); and "The Bowery" (1933; Raoul Walsh), with Wallace Beery, George Raft, Pert Kelton, Jackie Cooper, and Fay Wray.
March 18: "Objective, Burma!" (1945; Raoul Walsh), *with Errol Flynn,* William Prince, and George Tobias; and "Uncertain Glory" (1944; Raoul Walsh), with Errol Flynn and Paul Lukas.
March 19: "Gun Fury" (1954; Raoul Walsh), with Rock Hudson and Donna Reed; and "Colorado Territory" (1949; Raoul Walsh), with Joel McCrea and Virginia Mayo.
March 20-21: "Manpower" (†) and "The Man I Love" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
March 11: "Who'll Stop the Rain" (1978; Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte, Tuesday Weld, and Michael Moriarty; and "The Dogs of War" (1981; John Irvin), with Christopher Walken, Tom Berenger, and Colin Blakely.
March 12: "Bananas" (1971; Woody Allen), with Allen; and "Don't Drink the Water" (1969; Howard Morris), with Jackie Gleason, Estelle Parsons, and Ted Bessell.
March 13-14: "Despair" (1979; Rainer Werner Fassbinder), with Dirk Bogarde and Andréa Ferréol; and "Querelle" (1983; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Brad Davis, Franco Nero, and Jeanne Moreau.
March 15: "Diva" (1981; Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Wilhelmenia Fernandez and Frédéric Andrei; and "The Moon in the Gutter" (†).
March 16: "C'est Comme une Peine d'Amour" (1985; Suzanne Guy); and "Memoirs" (1984; Bachar Chbib).
March 17: "The Missionary" (1982; Richard Loncraine), with Michael Palin, Maggie Smith, Trevor Howard, and Denholm Elliott; and "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus."
March 18: "Cutter's Way" ("Cutter and Bone;" 1981; Ivan Passer), *with* Jeff Bridges, John Heard, and Lisa Eichhorn; and "The Angel Levine" (†).
March 19: "Interiors" (1978; Woody Allen), with Diane Keaton, Maureen Stapleton, Geraldine Page, Mary Beth Hurt, Sam Waterston, and E. G. Marshall; and "The Front" (1976; Martin Ritt), with Woody Allen, Zero Mostel, and Herschel Bernardi.
March 20: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964; Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden; and "Lolita" (1962; Stanley Kubrick), with Sue Lyon, James Mason, Peter Sellers, and Shelley Winters.
March 21: "Something Wild" (1986; Jonathan Demme), with Jeff Daniels and

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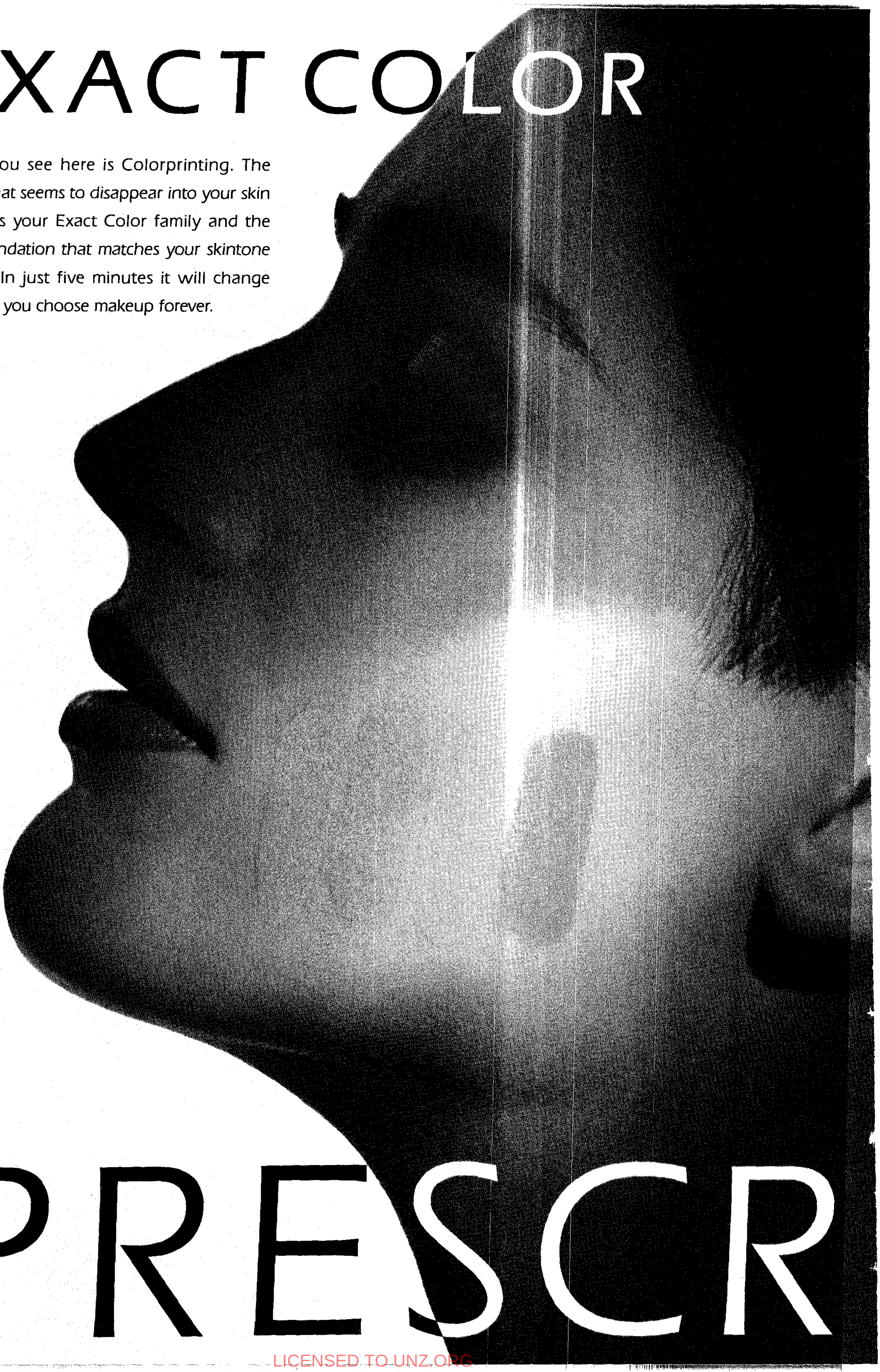

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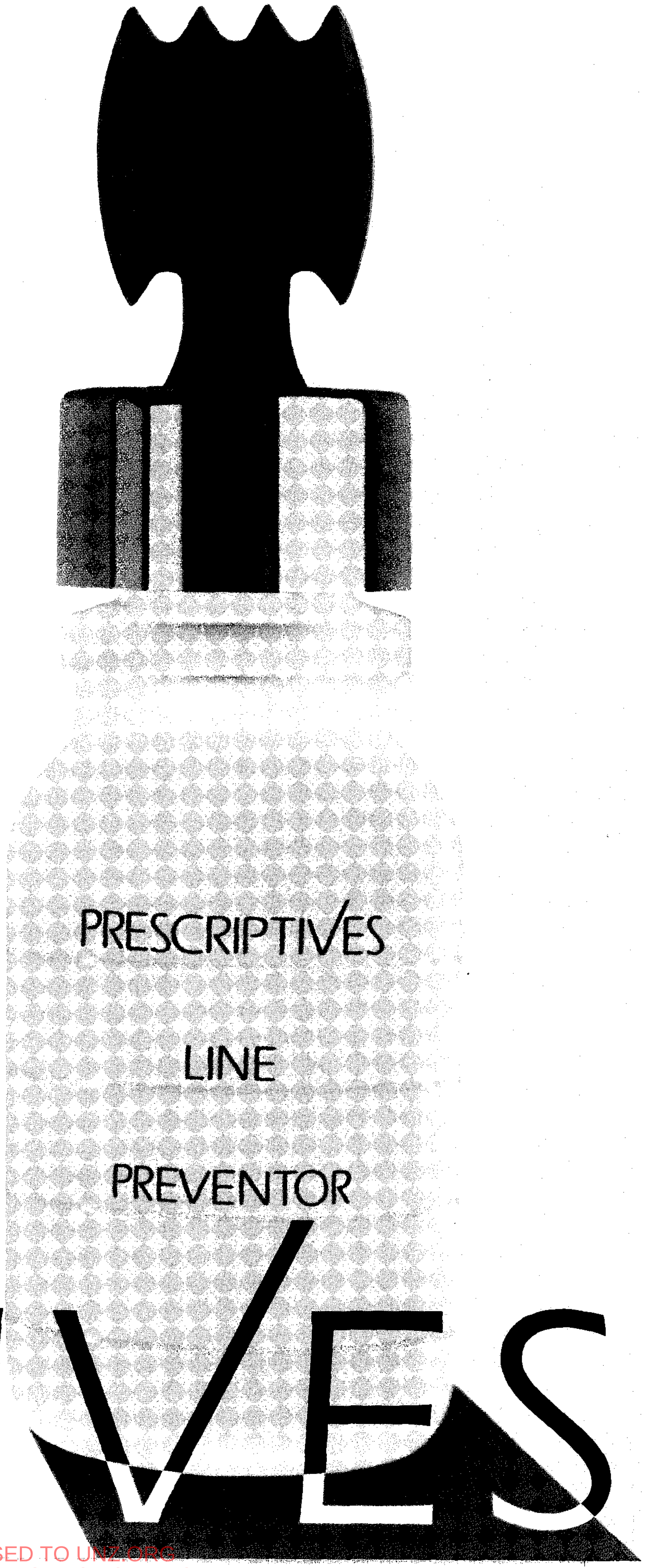

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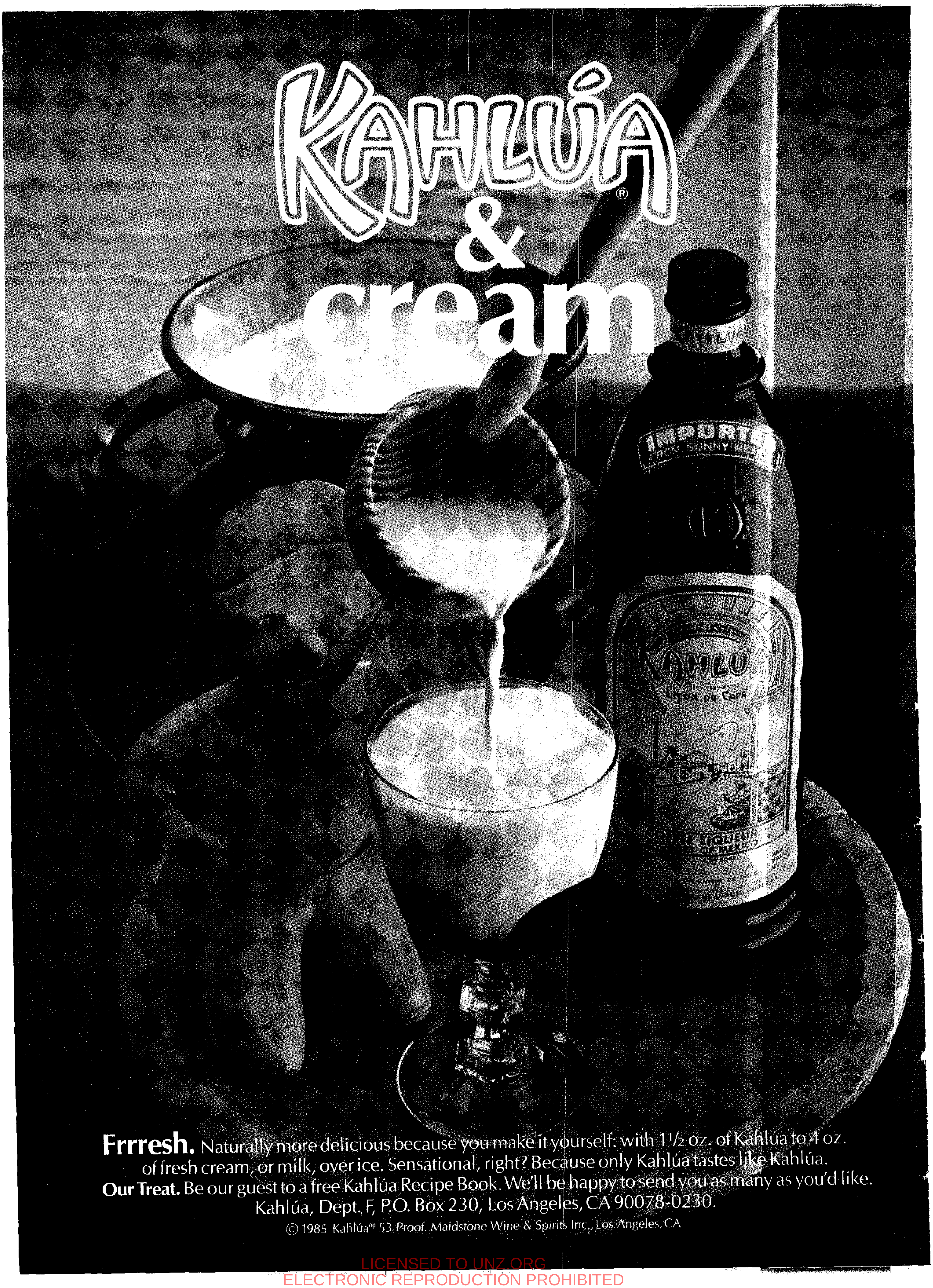
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Melanie Griffith; and "Citizens Band" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

March 11: "Tea in the Harem" (1986; Mehdi Charef; in French); and "The Sleeping Car Murder" (1966; Costa-Gavras; in French), with Simone Signoret and Yves Montand.

March 12: "L'Avventura" (1959; Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti, Gabriele Ferzetti, and Léa Massari; and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959; Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva and Eiji Okada.

March 13-14: "Ménage" (1986; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Michel Blanc, and Miou-Miou; and "Going Places" (1974; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Miou-Miou, and Patrick Dewaere.

March 15: "Gandhi" (1982; Richard Attenborough), with Ben Kingsley.

March 16: "Trading Places" (1983; John Landis), with Dan Aykroyd, Eddie Murphy, Ralph Bellamy, Don Ameche, and Jamie Lee Curtis; and "Easy Living" (1937 †).

March 17: "The Affair Blum" (1948; Erich Engel; in German); and "Der Untertan" (1951; Wolfgang Staudte; in German).

March 18: "The Devils" (1971; Ken Russell), with Vanessa Redgrave and Oliver Reed; and "Dante's Inferno" (1967; Ken Russell; a BBC television film), with Oliver Reed.

March 19: "The Paleface" (1948; Norman Z. McLeod), with Bob Hope and Jane Russell; and "Son of Paleface" (1952; Frank Tashlin), with Bob Hope, Jane Russell, and Roy Rogers.

March 20-21: "Local Hero" (1983; Bill Forsyth), with Peter Riegert, Denis Lawson, Fulton MacKay, and Burt Lancaster; and "Atlantic City" (1981; Louis Malle), with Burt Lancaster, Susan Sarandon, and Kate Reid.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 11: "Funny Face" (1957; Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, and Kay Thompson; and "Sabrina" (1954; Billy Wilder), with Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn, and William Holden.

March 12: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (1950; Michael Gordon), with José Ferrer, Mala Powers, and William Prince; and "Scaramouche" (1952; George Sidney), with Stewart Granger, Eleanor Parker, Janet Leigh, and Mel Ferrer.

March 13-14: "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919; Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover, and Friedrich Feher; and "M" (1932; Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre.

March 15: "Harold and Maude" (1971; Hal Ashby), with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; and "Where's Poppa?" (1970; Carl Reiner), with George Segal, Ruth Gordon, and Trish Van Devere.

March 16: "Torment" (†) and "Summer Interlude" (†).

March 17: "Blood and Sand" (1941 †); and "Captain from Castile" (1947; Henry King), with Tyrone Power and Jean Peters.

March 18: "The Seventh Cross" (1944; Fred Zinnemann), with Spencer Tracy, Signe Hasso, Hume Cronyn, and Jessica Tandy; and "Fury" (1936 †).

March 19: "Born Yesterday" (1950; George Cukor), with Judy Holliday, William Holden, and Broderick Crawford; and "The Marrying Kind" (1952; George Cukor), with Judy Holliday and Aldo Ray.

March 20-21: "The Paradine Case" (1947; Alfred Hitchcock), with Alida Valli, Gregory Peck, Charles Laughton, and Ann Todd; and "North by Northwest" (1959; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, and Martin Landau.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: The final showing in a program of the five films nominated for the 1986 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film—March 12 at 3 and 6:30: "'38" (1986; directed by Wolfgang Glück; in German, with English subtitles).... ¶ From March 13: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

Theatre 2: From March 13: See listings under "Film Society of Lincoln Center."

Film Society of Lincoln Center (at MOMA)—The first programs in a sixteen-day festival of new films by new directors. March 13 at 6: "Black and White" (France; Claire Devers).... ¶ March 13 at 8:30 and March 14 at 1: "Playing Away" (United Kingdom; Horace Ové).... ¶ March 14 at 3:30: "Black and White." ... ¶ March 14 at 6: "Positive I.D." (United States; Andy Anderson).... ¶ March 14 at 8:30 and March 15 at 1: "The Night of the Pencils" (Argentina; Hector Olivera).... ¶ March 15 at 3:30: "Positive I.D." ... ¶ March 15 at 6: "Hey Babu Riba" (Yugoslavia; Jovan Acin).... ¶ March 15 at 8:30 and March 16 at 6: "The Woman Alone" (1981; Poland; Agnieszka Holland).... ¶ March 16 at 8:30: "Hey Babu Riba." ... ¶ March 17 at 6: "A Promise" (Japan; Yoshishige Yoshida).... ¶ March 17 at 8:30 and March 18 at 6: "The Realm of Fortune" (Mexico; Arturo Ripstein).... ¶ March 18 at 8:30: "A Promise." ... ¶ March 19 at 6: "Wild Mountains" (1985; People's Republic of China; Yan Xueshu).... ¶ March 19 at 8:30: "The Dark Side of the Moon" (Denmark; Erik Clausen).... ¶ March 20 at 6: "In the Jaws of Life" (1984; Yugoslavia; Rajko Grlic). ... ¶ March 20 at 8:30 and March 21 at 1: "Sleepwalk" (United States; Sara Driver); and "Drum/Sing" (1985; New Zealand; Gregor Nicholas).... ¶ March 21 at 3:30: "In the Jaws of Life." ... ¶ March 21 at 6: "Loyalties" (Canada; Anne Wheeler). ... ¶ March 21 at 8:30: "Wild Mountains." (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9500.)

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"Social Engagement: Women's Video in the '80's," a program of thirteen experimental narrative and documentary videotapes. The schedule of performances is complicated: our best advice is to phone the museum for film and time schedules. Closed Mondays.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—"Japan at War," films made in Japan between 1938 and 1947, shown in Japanese, with English subtitles. March 11 at 7:30: "Our Planes Fly South" (1943; Yasushi Sasaki), with Shinyo Nara.... ¶ March 13 at 7:30: "The Most Beautiful" (1944; Akira Kurosawa), with Takashi Shimura; and "Oh Wonderful Life" (1944; Mikio Naruse), with Kingoro Yanagiya.... ¶ March 18 at 7:30: "The Story of Tank Commander Nishizumi" (1941; Kozaburo Yoshimura), with Ken Uehara.... ¶ March 20 at 7:30: "Blossoming Port" (1943; Keisuke Kinoshita), with Ken Uehara; and "Army" (1944; Keisuke Kinoshita), with Kinuyo Tanaka.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Angel Levine (1970)—Bernard Malamud's fable about an elderly Jewish tailor too skeptical to accept a black Jewish angel (Harry Belafonte) whom God has sent to help him. Unfortunately, the audience also has a hard time accepting the angel. Uninspired. With Zero Mostel and Ida Kaminska. Jan Kadar directed. (Thalia; March 18.)

Black Widow—Theresa Russell plays a slinky, cat-eyed dame who is somehow driven to marry a series of the richest millionaires in the country and murder them; Debra Winger plays an investigator at the Justice Department who notices the pattern in the sudden deaths and gets on the widow's trail. This may sound irresistibly succulent and trashy, but the director, Bob Rafelson, can't seem to give trash its due; he intellectualizes it. You expect the women to share identities or the picture to go lesbian, or *something*. But you're wrong. This is postmodernist film noir. Dennis Hopper and Nicol Williamson liven up their brief scenes as two of the widow's husbands; also with James Hong as a drugged-out private investigator, Terry O'Quinn as Winger's boss, and Sami Frey, Diane Ladd, Lois Smith, Leo Rossi, and David Mamet as a poker player. Cinematography by Conrad Hall. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/23/87.) (Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center.... ¶ 34th St. East; through March 12.... ¶ 86th St. East, and Embassy 72nd St.; through March 19.)

Blood and Sand (1941)—Tyrone Power plays Juan, the poor Spanish boy who rises to fame in the bullring, but color was the real star of the film. Rouben Mamoulian, who directed, planned this film to resemble the works of the great Spanish painters, using dark, ominous tones and splashy, symbolic reds. As the bullfight critic, the huge Laird Cregar pirouettes, whirling Juan's red cape; as a rich, lusciously decadent vampire who represents "death in the evening," Rita Hayworth wears deliberately jarring crimsons. Unfortunately, the script doesn't have the energy of the color design. Tyrone Power looks weary, the pace is draggy, and the presentiments of doom make one groan. In the role of Juan's saintly wife, Linda Darnell is beautiful and ludicrously American, and although, as Juan's mother, Nazimova manages to bring some emotion into her few scenes, it's embarrassing to see this legendary actress as a cliché peasant, on her knees scrubbing floors. Jo Swerling did the adaptation of the Ibañez novel; Hermes Pan choreographed the dances and Budd Boetticher choreographed the crowds. With John Carradine, Anthony Quinn, J. Carrol Naish, Vicente Gomez, Lynn Bari, Pedro de Cordoba, Victor Kilian, and Fortunio Bonanova. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 17.)

Blue Velvet—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rossellini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. (9/22/86) (Criterion Center.... ¶ Waverly, and Olympia Quad; through March 12.... ¶ Eastside Cinema, and Quad Cinema; starting March 13.)

Citizens Band (1977; also known as "Handle with Care")—A high-spirited, elegantly deadpan comedy, with a mellow, light touch. Paul Brickman, who wrote the screenplay, had an idea worthy of Preston Sturges: that as disembodied voices, with identities borrowed from Pop fantasies, and signal names to confirm their new self-image, CB users could live another life on the public airwaves. CB functions as an authorized madness; it allows the characters to release their inhibitions while keeping one foot on the ground. The story is about the people in a Southwestern town and the collisions of their free-floating ids. Jonathan Demme directed, in a soft, subdued style—the film is lyrical and wiggy at the same time. It has the consistent vision of a classic comedy; it undercuts the characters' illusions without a breath of ill will. With Paul Le Mat, Marcia Rodd, and Ann Wedgeworth. (Thalia; March 21.)

Crimes of the Heart—With Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek; directed by Bruce Beresford. (12/15/86) (R.K.O. Art

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Greenwich Twin, New Carnegie, and Olympia Quad; through March 12.)

The Decline of the American Empire—Directed by Denys Arcand. A Canadian film, in French. (12/15/86) (Cinema 3.)

Easy Living (1937)—One of the most agreeable of the romantic slapstick comedies of the thirties, and full of surprises. Jean Arthur is the working girl whose life is completely changed when a sable coat, thrown out a millionaire's window, lands on her head. The movie is a wonderful fluke: the script, by Preston Sturges, is in his manic, everybody-with-something-to-say style; the director, Mitchell Leisen, tempered it with smooth takes and elegant clothes and sets. The film has at least one classic slapstick sequence (the little glass doors in an Automat fly open and people lunge for the free food). With Ray Milland, Edward Arnold, Mary Nash, William Demarest, Luis Alberni, Franklin Pangborn, and Esther Dale. (Thalia SoHo; March 16.)

Fury (1936)—Fritz Lang's first American movie, a melodrama about an orgy of mob violence against an innocent man. Spencer Tracy (as the victim) and Sylvia Sidney are very fine, and the picture has so much vitality that it's easy to make allowances for the tacky ending. The schematic view of fate, the lighting and design, the stylized movements of the lynchers all relate to the theatrical wing of the German Expressionist movement; Lang brings a heavy battery of advanced stagecraft to the small-town American Southern setting. Norman Krasna did the story; Bartlett Cormack and Lang did the screenplay. With Edward Ellis, Walter Brennan, Bruce Cabot, Frank Albertson, and Walter Abel. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 18.)

Going Hollywood (1933)—Marion Davies, past her good years, is so heavily made up in this M-G-M musical that she looks like a wax effigy of herself. Bing Crosby plays opposite her and sings the memorable "Temptation" to the tantalizingly naughty Fifi D'Orsay. There are some other good songs by Arthur Freed and Nacio Herb Brown, and the cast includes young, trim Patsy Kelly, as well as Ned Sparks and Stuart Erwin. Raoul Walsh directed, from a screenplay by Donald Ogden Stewart. (Regency; March 16-17.)

Hannah and Her Sisters (1986)—With Mia Farrow, Barbara Hershey, Dianne Wiest, and Michael Caine; directed by Woody Allen. (2/24/86) (Eastside Cinema, Quad Cinema, and Metro Cinema; through March 12.)

The Left-Handed Woman (1980)—Peter Handke wrote and directed this moving, mysterious film about a young German wife and mother living near Paris who suddenly understands that she must live apart from her husband and from almost everyone else in the world. Watching it, we struggle a little at first against such an all-encompassing alienation, but the beautifully photographed (by Robby Müller) quiet scenes and the thrilling pauses of the movie, to say nothing of the presence and gravity of Edith Clever in the central role, silence and reward us with the unanswerable logic of art. With Bruno Ganz, Markus Mühleisen, and Bernhard Minetti. In German. (Public Theatre; starting March 20, showings at 10.)

Little Shop of Horrors—Jivey, senseless fun. This musical is taken from the Off Broadway show that was based on Roger Corman's 1960 quickie—a junky travesty of sci-fi genetic-mutation pictures. Rick Moranis plays Seymour, the assistant in a skid-row flower shop, circa 1960, who tends the ravenous little flowering cactus that he names after the sexpot clerk Audrey (Ellen Greene). Her steady date is a sadistic biker-dentist (Steve Martin), and Bill Murray plays this brute's pain-freak patient. The Martin-Murray sequence is a classic encounter: a piece of transcendent slapstick. The movie is nothing but blown-up cartoon-style friskiness, but it makes you feel as inexplicably sappy and contented as a kid used to feel on Sunday morning lying on his stomach reading the funnies. The script and the lyrics are by Howard Ashman; the music is by Alan Menken. Directed by Frank Oz. (1/12/87) (R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin. . . . ¶ Movieland; through March 12.)

The Man I Love (1947)—Of its kind, not bad at all. Warner Brothers, combining two genres in the hope of snaring a double audience, put together several of these musical melodramas, and this one, directed by Raoul Walsh, is one of the smoothest. Ida Lupino stars, as a singer; also with Bruce Bennett as a jazz musician (one of his few good roles), Robert Alda, Andrea King, Martha Vickers, Alan Hale, Dolores Moran, and some talented dubbers. The score includes a whole raft of classics—"The Man I Love," of course, and "Body and Soul," "Bill," "Liza," "Why Was I Born?," and "If I Could Be with You One Hour Tonight." (Regency; March 20-21.)

Manpower (1941)—This is one of those roughneck melodramas about two men friends who both fall for the same woman. Marlene Dietrich comes out of prison after serving a year for theft and gets involved with Edward G. Robinson and his buddy, George Raft, who are Los Angeles light-and-power-company linemen. Dietrich has never seemed more foolishly miscast than in her bungalow apron, baking biscuits for good, honest Robinson. And though Robinson doesn't give a bad performance, he's playing the sort of virtuous character nobody wants to watch. Raoul Walsh directed. With Alan Hale, Eve Arden, Ward Bond, Frank McHugh, Faye Emerson, Barton MacLane, Joyce Compton, Walter Catlett, Anthony Quinn, and Barbara Pepper. (Regency; March 20-21.)

Mona Lisa—Directed by the Irish novelist turned moviemaker Neil Jordan, the whole movie has some of the potency of cheap music that's represented by the title song (in Nat King Cole's 1950 recording). The short, chunky Bob Hoskins is tremendous as a one-time petty crook, just emerged from prison; given the job of chauffeuring a black call girl (Cathy Tyson) on her nightly rounds, he falls in love with her. She sets him to searching for a friend she's worried about—a blond fifteen-year-old heroin addict. As he makes his way through the strip joints and whores' hang-outs, he's sickened by the way the girls are mistreated, and he sees that his old boss (Michael Caine) is in the rotten thick of it. Jordan shows a gift for making the emotional atmosphere visual, and vice versa. And the way he uses baroque touches and the clichés of old thrillers they become part of a fluid, enjoyable texture. With Robbie Coltrane, Clarke Peters, and Zoe Nathenson. Script by Jordan and David Leland. (6/16/86) (Quad Cinema.)

The Moon in the Gutter (1983)—Coming right after Jean-Jacques Beineix's sparkling, gift-wrapped "Diva," this oppressive romantic tragedy, in which Gérard Depardieu plays a stevedore obsessed with memories of his dead sister, may be a shock, but it's the kind of excruciatingly silly movie that only a talented director can make. Nastassia Kinski is the unattainable—the moon that shines on poor Depardieu down there in his Brando T-shirt in the film-noir gutter. The actors are helpless, because the movie isn't about their characters' emotions—it's about Beineix's swooning response to the earlier movie stars that they're standing in for. Beineix can sometimes engage us by his visual flourishes, but it's a suffocating, empty movie. With Victoria Abril, Bertice Reading, Dominique Pinon, and Milena Vukotić. In French. (Thalia; March 15.)

The Morning After—With Jane Fonda and Jeff Bridges, directed by Sidney Lumet. (12/29/86) (Plaza, and Criterion Center; through March 12.)

Outrageous Fortune—Two young New York actresses of contrasting types—Shelley Long is a lofty ditz and Bette Midler is a vulgarian-sexpot Kewpie doll—discover they've been sharing a lover (Peter Coyote). When he disappears, they chase him across the country to the cliffs and mesas of New Mexico, becoming friends along the way. Near the start, there are a few snappers for Midler, and she gets to shoot some wonderful derisive looks at Long. Though the gags aren't fresh, the screenwriter, Leslie Dixon, knows how to construct them. But with Arthur Hiller directing much of the dialogue turns into squawking, and the movie is flattened out and rackety, with Midler doing her damnedest to pump sass and energy into it. Peter Coyote gives a polished and wily performance in the first section, before he gets lost in the noise; also with Robert Prosky, George Carlin, Florence Stanley, John Schuck, Ji-Tu Cumbuka, and Jerry Zaks. (2/23/87) (Coronet, and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through March 12. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through March 19. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad, and Embassy; starting March 13.)

Platoon—Vietnam, as seen by the writer-director Oliver Stone, who dropped out of Yale and, feeling, he says, that he needed to be an anonymous common soldier, enlisted and saw action with the 25th Infantry along the Cambodian border. Charlie Sheen plays Chris, the autobiographical figure (who, regrettably, narrates the movie by reading aloud the letters he writes home to his grandmother). Chris finds two authority figures in two sergeants who represent good and evil. Willem Dafoe's Sgt. Elias is a supersensitive hippie pothead, who cares about the men—he's a veteran fighter who's kept his soul. Tom Berenger's Sgt. Barnes is a kickass boozer—a psycho whose scarred, dead-eyed face suggests the spirit of war. There are fine, scary scenes, but there are others where you think, It's a bit much. The movie crowds you; it doesn't give you room to have an honest emotion. And when Chris calmly, deliberately shoots a fellow-soldier, and the murder is presented as an unambiguous, justified execution, you may wonder at the mixture of war elegy and pulp revenge fantasy. With Keith David, Forest Whitaker, and Kevin Dillon. Cinematography by Robert Richardson. (1/12/87) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Radio Days—Woody Allen looks back fondly, in a warm, amber-toned reminiscence of what radio meant to him and his family at the start of the Second World War. The actors who make up the eleven-year-old hero's lower-middle-class Jewish family in Rockaway Beach are a wonderful group of comedians—Michael Tucker, Julie Kavner, Josh Mostel, Renee Lippin, Joy Newman, Dianne Wiest—yet they're never up close, at the center of our attention. Allen has reduced everyone to harmlessness. It's pure nostalgia—the past sweetened and trivialized. The mood is soft regret: he treats the old songs (the film incorporates a generous assortment of hits) as a value that we've lost. As he spells it out, the public's memories of the stars of radio become dimmer each year. The question the film asks—its theme—is "Will our fame last?" Implicitly, he's saying that we movie stars (and TV stars) must learn humility. With Mia Farrow as the one character whom we follow over a period of years, as she rises from cigarette girl to jewel-decked radio star, and Seth Green as the boy, Gina DeAngelis, Danny Aiello, Denise Dummont, Tito Puente, Jeff Daniels, Tony Roberts, Wallace Shawn, and Diane Keaton. The cinematography is by Carlo Di Palma. (3/9/87) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Round Midnight—Most of Bertrand Tavernier's mournful, blue-toned movie, which, an opening title tells us, was "inspired by incidents in the lives of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell," is set in Paris in 1959. The French jazz enthusiast Paudras is now called Francis Borier and is played by François Cluzet, and Powell, the great bebop pianist, who suffered frequent nervous breakdowns and then made a new life abroad, is now the dazed, alcoholic tenor-sax man Dale Turner, and is played by the near-legendary Dexter Gordon. The enthusiast is a saintly groupie. You know what kind of movie it's going to be when you see this guy out in a drenching rain, crouched against the building where the American is playing, because he doesn't have the money to go in. Cluzet is soaking wet, but his eyes shine and he listens to Dexter Gordon's music worshipfully. The French are pretty hard to take when they celebrate how much they love American art. You may come out with the feeling that Tavernier is proud of the gloomy dullness of the movie, that he sees virtue in it. With Sandra Reaves-Phillips, Lonette McKee, John Berry, Martin Scorsese, Philippe Noiret, and many well-known musicians. (D. W. Griffith. . . . ¶ 8th St. Playhouse; starting March 13.)

Summer Interlude (1951; "Illicit Interlude")—This early Ingmar Bergman film is about the loss of love: a tired ballerina of twenty-eight (Maj-Britt Nilsson), who has ceased to feel or care, is suddenly caught up by the memory of the summer when her life ended. We see her then as a fresh, eager fifteen-year-old, in love with a frightened, uncertain student (beautifully played by Birger Malmsten), and we watch the delicate shades of their "summer play," interrupted by glances at adult relatives, as Bergman contrasts decadence and youth, corruption and beauty. Bergman found his style in this film, and it is regarded by cinema historians not only as his breakthrough but also as the beginning of "a new, great epoch in Swedish films." Many of the themes (whatever one thinks of them) that Bergman later expanded are here. But this movie, with its rapturous yet ruined love affair, also has a lighter side; it is the highly personal work of an emerging director—a work with elegiac charm and sweetness. With Alf Kjellin, Stig Olin, and George Funkquist. In Swedish. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 16.)

Thérèse—Shot in a diorama in a richly austere visual style—the actors appear against a mottled, opaque backdrop—this Alain Cavalier film is undoubtedly a feat of some sort. (But perhaps it's no more than an art curiosity.) It concentrates our attention on the bare, masterly images (lighted by Philippe Rousselot) that come out of the darkness, and on tiny sounds and whispered bits of conversation. The script, by Cavalier and his daughter, Camille de Casabianca, is a minimalist version of the story of the young girl who at fifteen got permission to enter the Carmelite order; she died of tuberculosis in 1897, at twenty-four, and was canonized and became popular as St. Theresa of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus, and the model of the pure woman. (This is at least the fourth French movie she has inspired.) What Cavalier's version gives us is the beaming eagerness of a girl (Catherine Mouchet) who seems born to be a nun. She takes completely literally her marriage to Christ, and burns with love for her bridegroom. But Cavalier's formal, noncommittal style is so measured that after a while the film's austerity may begin to seem as repressive as the cloistered life. In French. (1/26/87) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Torment (1944)—Alf Sjöberg directed this famous study of adolescent despair and mean-spirited, authoritarian education. It was written by the twenty-five-year-old Ingmar Bergman, who worked on it as Sjöberg's assistant. (The following year, Bergman became a director.) Stig Järrel plays the sadist schoolmaster; the student and the shopgirl whom he victimizes are played by Alf Kjellin and Mai Zetterling (who also became directors). Gunnar Björnstrand and others of Bergman's troupe may be glimpsed in small roles, looking very young. In Swedish. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 16.)

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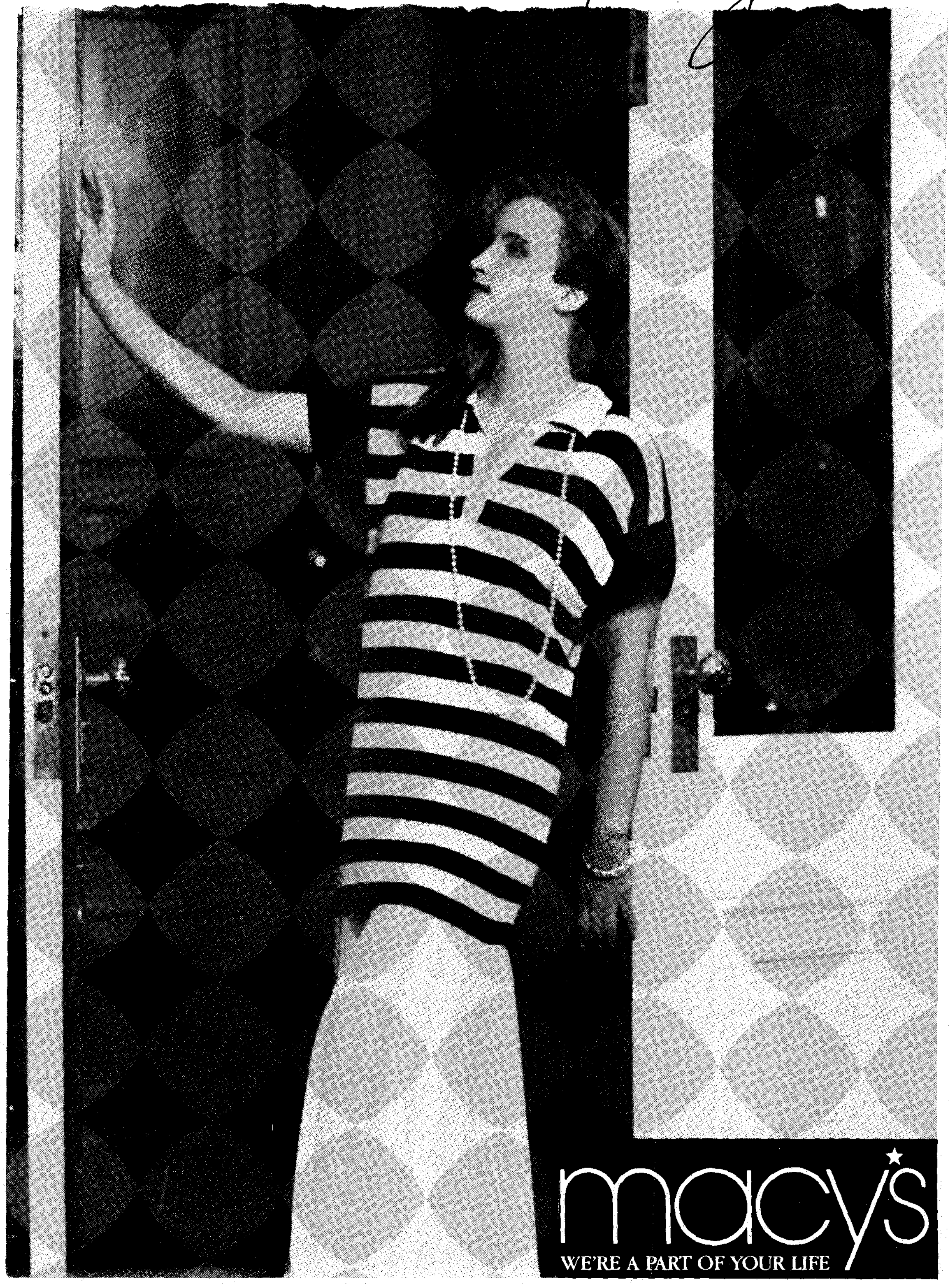
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A POPULAR history of Siena tells a horrible and curious story. Apparently, during a war between Siena and Florence in the middle of the thirteenth century, the Florentines once attempted to start a plague in Siena by catapulting dead donkeys over the city walls. The story may be apocryphal, but it summons up an entire sequence to the mind's eye: the smirks of the Sienese, standing on their walls, as they watch the Florentines gather their improbable ammunition; the fixed, almost embarrassed determination of the Florentines as they load up; the silent moment of uncertainty on both sides as the donkeys fly through the air; and then the slow realization among the Sienese that the laugh, after all, may be on them.

To succeed, the Florentine plan would have required a highly ordered, lucky, and far from certain chain of events—a kind of Optimal Donkey Deployment Scenario (ODDS). It would have demanded, for one thing, an almost impossible passivity among the Sienese. (Donkeys don't transmit plague directly to humans, for example, though apparently if they're left lying about there are ways they can infect rats, which do.) Still, it might have worked.

But it isn't just the damage inflicted on the opposition that has to be considered when we evaluate a weapons system; there are also the costs—strategic and logistic (not to mention moral and political)—to the side that does the launching. Donkeys were not so common or valueless in medieval warfare that their corpses could cheerfully be tossed over walls like party favors. On the contrary, they were the jeeps and trucks of a medieval army, and enduring, much less encouraging, a plague among them was something that would have appalled any rational Florentine general. A good general would rather have his donkeys alive and kicking. Furthermore, the Florentines surely (*almost* surely) arrived at the notion that dead donkeys might cause a plague among the Sienese because dead donkeys were already causing a plague among the Florentines. The donkey plan, therefore, may well have been the consequence not of special ingenuity and resource but of strategic bankruptcy and desperation.

The ballistic-donkey system is also a perfect instance of the too common paradox presented by a highly destructive weapon that can be controlled only very imprecisely. No one could have known, given the state of thirteenth-century medicine, how dead donkeys caused plague. The Florentines could only have suspected that somehow they did, and their suspicion could have come only from hard, wasting experience. A certain retrospective skepticism about what might be called the "operational" aspects of ODDS begins to set in: what did the Florentines do at the unavoidable moment when someone who in a vague way understood the risk of contagion had to prepare the poor infected corpses to be launched? Who had the job of loading the catapults?

"Advances" in weaponry generally seem to have the peculiar character of the ODDS system; it is what sets their history apart from the rest of the history of technology. Most technological advance, after all, is the story of ever-increasing specialization and perfection of results: a move away from gross, generalized effects toward highly focussed and specialized ones. The history of weaponry, from dead donkeys to poison gas to atomic bombs, presents just the opposite story: not one of ever more brilliant moves in a game of strategic chess but one of ever more panicked attempts to knock over the chessboard, and all the pieces on it.

The scene that finally presents itself

to the imagination, then, is not one of resource and ingenuity versus mocking incredulity. There is only the anxiety of the Florentine leaders as they try to anticipate what retaliation the Sienese, invisible within their walls, might be planning; the dread of the catapult loaders; the sight of dead animals and frightened men in a beautiful meadow in Tuscany.

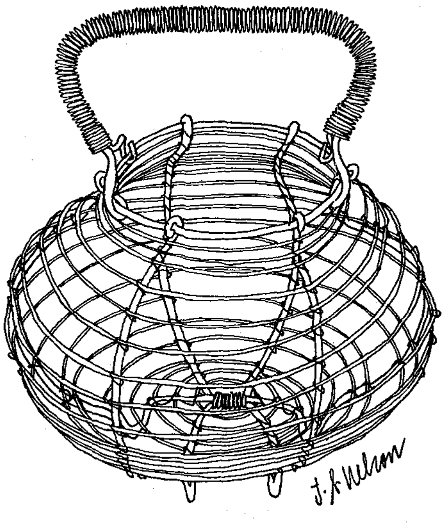
• •

Hugues Cuénod

"IF you sing a phrase as you would speak it, the music will attach itself naturally to the words," said Hugues Cuénod, the distinguished Swiss tenor, during a conversation we had with him recently, over coffee, in Alice Tully's Central Park South living room. "Music must be inflexible when you are learning the notes, but when you add the text you must take the opportunity to relax and think about what you are singing." M. Cuénod, a tall, aristocratic, white-haired man of eighty-four, was trying to explain the mechanics of an effortlessly elegant vocal technique that has sustained one of the longest performing careers in musical history. Light streamed across panelled walls as Miss Tully's two white Maltese terriers frolicked at our feet, punctuating the conversation with an occasional yip.

M. Cuénod, who is making his Metropolitan Opera début this week, in Franco Zeffirelli's new production of Puccini's "Turandot," told us that he had relinquished some of his favorite roles, such as the Evangelist in the Bach St. Matthew Passion ("It's just too high for me now"), but that he continued to perform in opera and in recitals. "I usually share the program with a pianist, and I sing Debussy, Fauré, Poulenc, and Monteverdi," he said. His role in "Turandot"—as the aged Emperor Altoum—was, he added, a bit frightening. "I'm seated on a high throne at the back of the stage, in the center of a forest of steps and pillars, and I have to sing all the way out into that enormous auditorium," he said. "Somebody went to the balcony during my first rehearsal and reported that my voice was coming through clearly. It's never been a large voice, but it's always been clear and well focussed. Funnily enough, 'Turandot' was one of the first operas that made a deep impression on me. In 1927, when I was still a student in Vienna, I saw the German-language première, with Jan Kiepura as Calaf and Maria Jeritza as Turandot. I still remember the magnificent robes that Jeritza wore and the crystalline sound of her voice. About ten years ago, I sang the Emperor in Geneva with Birgit Nilsson, and I had some difficulty maintaining my dignity, because during the pauses in the riddle scene Birgit would turn around and make faces at me. She loves to joke."

We asked M. Cuénod to give us some highlights from his remarkable career. He began by saying that his first stage role had been that of the hotel director in the 1928 Paris production of Ernst Krenek's "Jonny Spielt Auf," a jazz opera that caused a sensation at the time. "Then Mary Garden, who was a family friend, decided that I should appear in one of Noël Coward's operettas," he went on. "All *I* wanted to do was to sing the Bach Evangelist, but Mary had made up her mind, so in 1929 I found myself in New York doing 'Bitter Sweet' at the old Ziegfeld Theatre. Mary was very forceful and very fond of me. I worked with her on 'Pelléas,' and I sang the role several times in concert performances. Then, in 1932, I joined the Compagnie des Ménestrels. We played a wonderful evening of one-act comic operas by Offenbach for a whole winter in Geneva. Around 1934, after I'd returned to Paris, somebody took me to the house of Nadia Boulanger for her Wednesday-afternoon Bach sessions. I sang an aria for her, she invited me back, and I ended up singing thirty-five Bach cantatas with her that year. Then she organized public concerts with some of her more gifted pupils. We started with Monteverdi. She roped in me, Marie-Blanche de Polignac, a couple of other people, and a bass player, and we started working on the madrigals. Eventually, we recorded them, and that was the start of the Monteverdi renaissance. Mlle. Boulanger always looked a bit forbidding—she had white hair drawn back in a bun and wore pince-nez—but, surprisingly, she also had great humor."



During the nineteen-forties, M. Cuénod sang recitals and made records, building a reputation as a gifted operatic comprimario and a master of Baroque style. In 1951, his life changed abruptly, when Igor Stravinsky cast him as Sellem, the enthusiastic auctioneer, in the world première of "The Rake's Progress," at the Venice Festival. "It was a part that could have been written for me, it went so well," said M. Cuénod. "The entire musical world was at the Fenice that night, and the result was that, starting at the age of forty-nine, I had a whole different career. I never did big, sustained parts, because my voice wouldn't stand it, but the parts that I had been singing in small opera houses I began doing at Covent Garden, La Scala, Rome, Geneva, and Glyndebourne. One of my good roles was Vašek, the stutterer in 'The Bartered Bride.' You must play it so that people laugh at you with pity in their voices. At the other end of the scale is Don Basilio in 'Figaro.' You have to make him nasty but in a funny, bloodcurdling way. I'm also very fond of Triquet, the old gentleman in 'Eugen Onegin' who sings a French song in the middle of a Russian party, and of M. Taupe, the prompter who comes out at the end of Strauss's 'Capriccio' and explains that without him the music would stop and the audience would wake up."

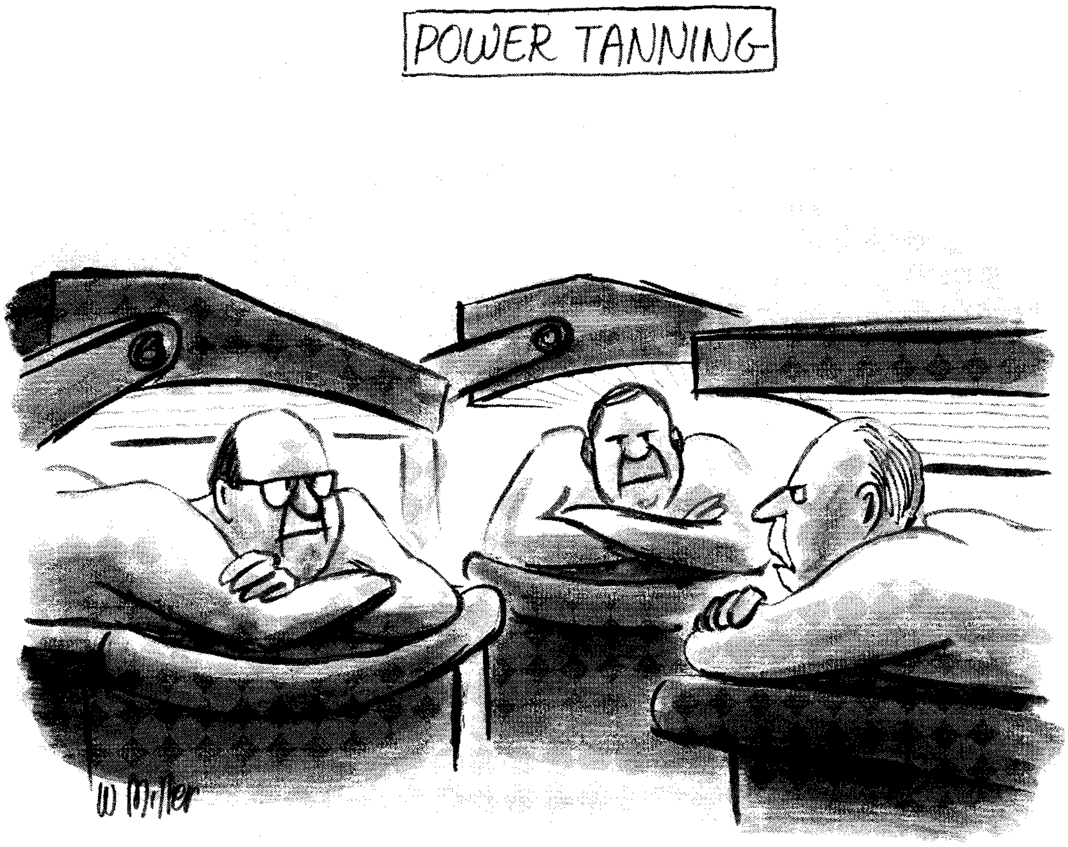
After "The Rake's Progress," M. Cuénod became one of Stravinsky's favorite singers. "In 1952, Igor sent me an atonal cantata that had been written for me," he told us. "I said I'd try it but didn't know if I could sing a thirteen-minute aria that was written in the middle—the break—of my voice, and that had only one place where you could take a deep breath. Igor said, 'But I have a record of you singing for twenty-two minutes in the Tenebrae service. We'll do this together in Hollywood in the autumn.' And we did." M. Cuénod sang other late Stravinsky works—"Canticum

Sacrum" and "Threni"—with great pleasure and some misgivings. "My major problem with Stravinsky was that in his twelve-tone scores there were no keys. I finally told him, 'Look, the only way I can sing your music is if I *imagine* I'm in one key and going to another.' He said, 'That is wrong, but go ahead if it suits you.' "

We asked M. Cuénod, who will celebrate his eighty-fifth birthday in June, how he had managed to preserve his voice at an age when most singers are long past retirement. He replied that perhaps it was because singing for him had always been a natural and instinctive process. "I had good teachers, but I never did much about technique," he said. "I have always sung spontaneously, and I have specialized in music that lies within the natural range of my voice. And I never did the big operatic roles, because I knew that my voice could not be concentrated and pushed to sing over an orchestra for a very long period of time. I've studied the Mozart roles—Ottavio and Tamino—but I've never sung them onstage, because they're too high and there's too much bel canto. My voice is a light lyric tenor, with the break lying between E and F. I could push it quite high in parlando roles—the Evangelist has a high B—but if it's bel canto or Mozart I stick to the middle ground."

"How high does the Emperor in 'Turandot' go?" we asked.

"That's written for a comfortable middle range," replied M. Cuénod, with a wicked glint in his blue eyes. "Any cat could do it."



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In Fashion

AT the Fashion Institute of Technology's current exhibition "Three Women: Madeleine Vionnet, Claire McCardell, Rei Kawakubo," we found ourself alongside Mary and Rebecca. Mary is the art director of a fashion magazine; Rebecca is a friend of ours who used to model clothes and still knows a lot about them. They guided us into the first room of the exhibition, which is devoted to dresses created by the great French designer Madeleine Vionnet in the nineteen-twenties and thirties.

"Now, Vionnet's signature was cutting on the bias, cutting *diagonally*, mostly in chiffon and crêpe de chine," Rebecca explained. "She discovered that if you imagined a woman's body not as a lot of surfaces, with backs and fronts, but, instead, as a kind of tube, with cloth draped diagonally across it, the fabric would cling naturally and beautifully to the body."

"She learned a lot by looking at lingerie," Mary added. "Before Vionnet, the only clothing that *was* bias-cut, and was meant to cling, was underwear."

"That's interesting," Rebecca said. "It happens all the time—designers getting ideas for outerwear from underwear."

"Of course, in a sense it all descends from Poiret," Mary went on. "Before him, even lingerie was structured and architectural. He created the necessity for clinging undergarments, and then Vionnet must have seen in the clinging undergarments a way of reimagining dressmaking."

Vionnet was not exactly a household name to us, but as we looked around the room her dresses seemed to us the most beautiful clothes we had ever seen. Even on stiff mannequins in dim light, and denied the continuo of youth and sunshine, her dresses—nearly all in pale colors just one tremulous note above neutral—had a Botticelli-like delicacy, grace, and wistfulness.

"Most of the time when people try to revive this classical tradition of young women in fluttering garments and windswept hair—you know, the Isadora Duncan and Picasso-in-the-twenties stuff—it seems too hearty," Rebecca said. "But not Vionnet's dresses!" It occurred to us then that this was the only costume exhibit we'd ever been to where the overwhelming effect was not one of *period*, where our first response was not a rush of nostalgic associations (although the whole world of Sacha Guitry and Colette was there to be associated with)—any more than our response to the Elgin marbles would be a rush of associations with the Peloponnesian War.

We walked out of the Vionnet room with Mary and Rebecca and turned a corner, into the kind of blinding white light that announces the arrival of extraterrestrials in Steven Spielberg movies. The room we had entered was devoted to the eccentric, inventive clothes of Rei Kawakubo, and it was lighted from above with no fewer than thirteen rows of six fluorescent lights.

"It's meant to suggest daylight," Mary explained helpfully. Slowly, we became accustomed to the glare, and we realized that many of the beautifully dressed people in Rei Kawakubo clothes we were looking at were in fact beautifully dressed mannequins in Rei Kawakubo clothes: it's a conceit of the designer and her curator, Kazuko Koike, to mingle mannequins among the spectators.

"Rei's clothes are extravagant variations on classical themes," Rebecca said. "They almost stray completely, but never quite. They're interesting to wear, because they're so witty and full of references. I once had to model a dress of hers that was an asymmetrical one-piece take-off on a schoolgirl's skirt and jacket, so you had to feel like a schoolgirl, only not."

"In the same way Vionnet looked East at times, a lot of Rei's clothes are responses to the West," Mary said. "Particularly to the kind of clothes art students were wearing in London in the seventies—the kind of thing Boy George vulgarized a little later on."

Where the Vionnet room had been a chapel of *haute couture*, the Kawakubo room was far more lively, and Mary and Rebecca picked out important people of the fashion world for us. "You can always tell the really legendary fashion editors from everyone else," Mary told us. "They're the older women dressed in simple black clothes and wearing *columns* of bracelets. I think they're awarded bracelets for merit, like stripes in the Army. In the Condé Nast Building, you can hear those editors coming from a block away. One of my favorite things is to sit by a runway at the Paris collections and listen to them rattle their bracelets, like castanets, when they all approve of something."

Next, Mary and Rebecca took us to look at the McCardells. Unlike Vionnet's, these clothes seemed pure period; they evoked the optimism of America just after the Second World War as powerfully as an old copy of *Life*.

"The wonderful thing about McCardell is what she did with pockets," Rebecca said. "They're big and low, and if you put your hands in them they give you this elegant *slouch*. Her clothes always make me think of those butterfly sling chairs from the fifties."

"You have to remember that McCardell was not *haute couture* but Seventh Avenue," said Mary. "I think that's the real lesson of this show—the connection among the three women. McCardell saw the possibility of a new kind of high style in sportswear in the same way that Vionnet saw high style hidden in lingerie and Rei in street clothing. It's really a show about finding whatever no one else wants and making something wonderful out of it."

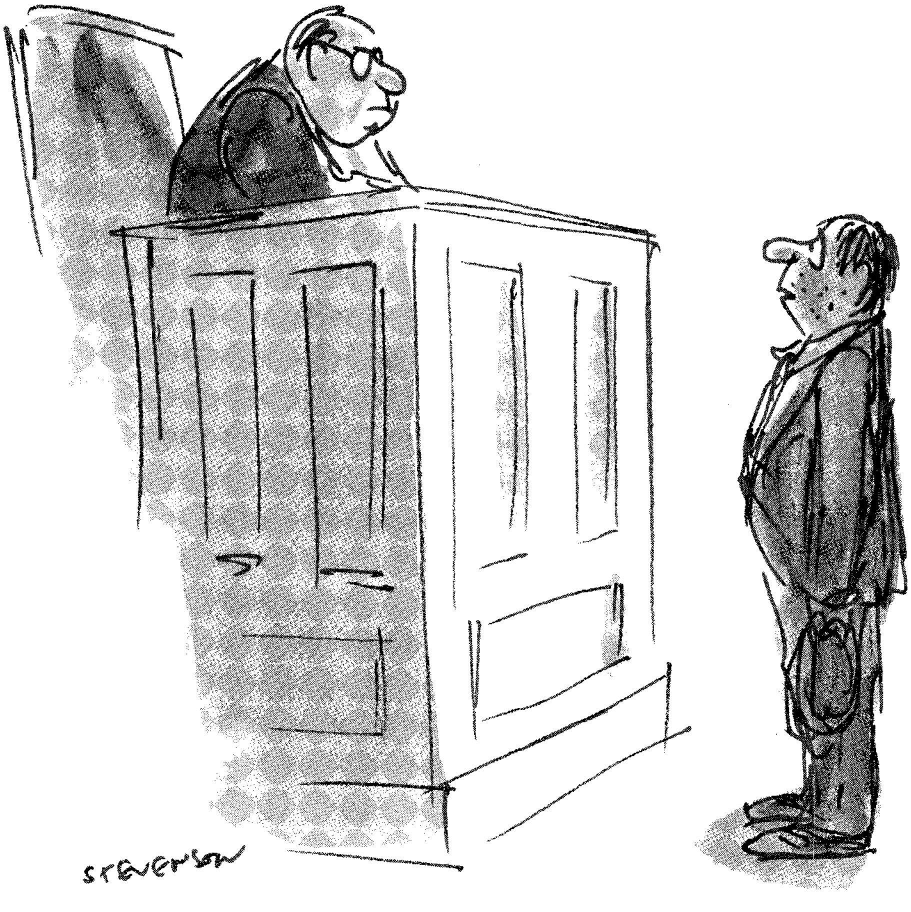
We were taken by McCardell, and tickled by Kawakubo, but we were haunted by Vionnet—so much so that later we worked up the nerve to call Diana Vreeland and asked her to explain things to us, more or less in the spirit of someone who, having just attended his first Celtics game, decides to call up Red Auerbach and ask him to explain why it is that this guy Bird makes so many neat plays.

First, we asked Mrs. Vreeland why so little was heard of Vionnet these days.

"Of *course* you don't hear of her," Mrs. Vreeland said. "To me, she's the most important name in dressmaking, but she was never fashionable. I mean, my God, everyone wanted her, but she was never *in fashion*. That was the great thing. I talked to her—I didn't know her, of course. Not at all. But she said to me, 'Now, my dear, you know, I never wanted to know anything about fashion. I wasn't fashionable, I wasn't interested in fashionable people. I just wanted to make beautiful clothes.' "

We asked Mrs. Vreeland to tell us why Vionnet's dresses seemed so timeless.

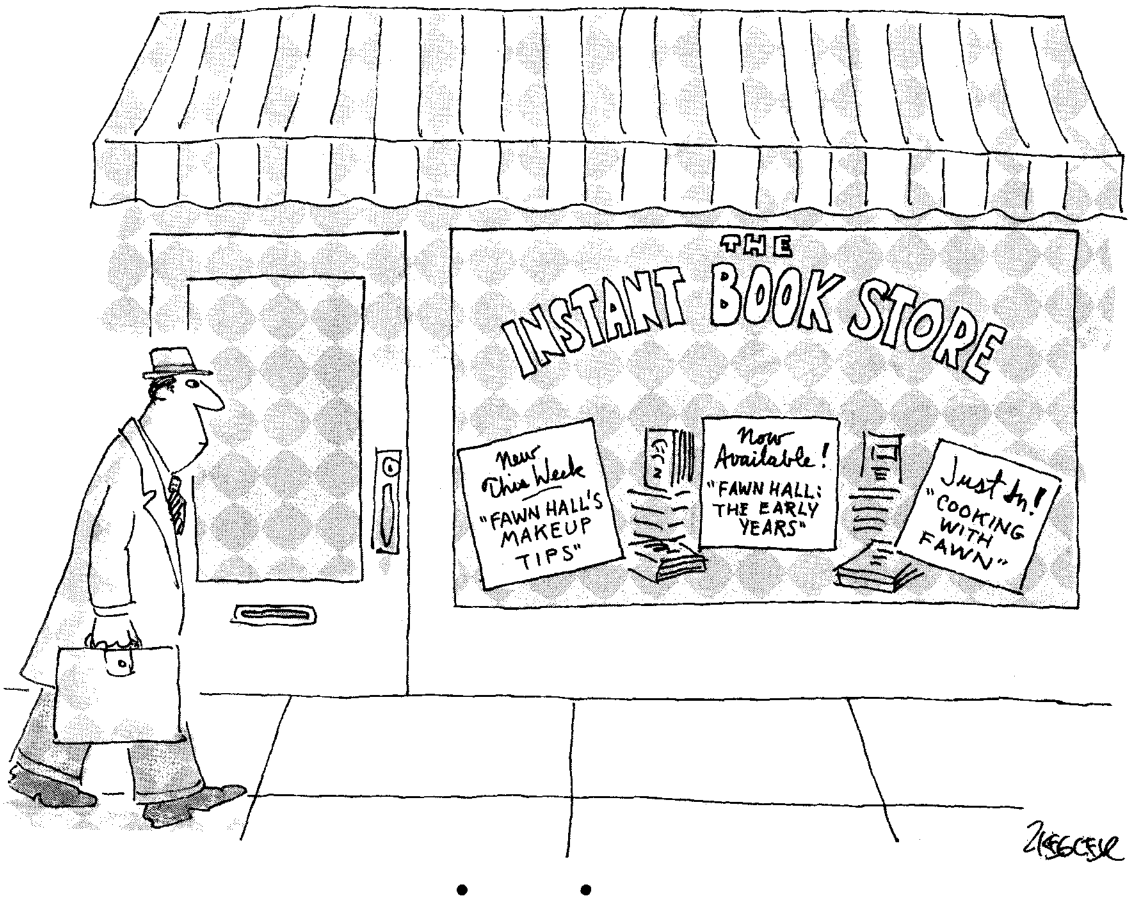
"Well, I can't talk about magic, you know," she said. "And Vionnet *was* magic. She did bias-cut and just . . . let . . . *go!* There's no pressure. Light as a feather. It's total inspiration and total *luxury*. She had a wonderful freshness, a wonderful sense of clarity—a sense of movement and, God, a sense of *pale*. You travel, you move, you're in paradise!"



"I needed an infusion of cash, Your Honor."

Miss Pancake

TO be crowned Miss Pancake, you have to show up on Shrove Tuesday at Peggy's Restaurant, on Franklin Street, near the Criminal Court Building, and while you're there you have to eat a ten-inch apple pancake faster than anyone else on the premises. Peggy's has a pressed-



tin ceiling, walls of salmon-pink plaster and red brick, gray-green cast-iron columns, Irish and American flags hanging from brass chandeliers, and a rosy glow. The regular customers at Peggy's are all good laughers. Peggy Doyle, the owner, has brunette hair, bright-red lipstick, and powdered cheeks, and on Shrove Tuesday she wore a blue sequinned cocktail dress that was the ideal uniform for a professional greeter.

Margarida Figueroa, a social worker (she is employed by the Cuban Crusade, an organization devoted to improving the welfare of certain Cubans), whose endearing traits have a lapel-grabbing immediacy (five minutes after meeting you, she gives you a Brazilian good-luck token—a tiny emerald-and-brass amulet, called a *figa*—which you're supposed to keep with you at all times, except during moments of utmost interpersonal intimacy, and later she gives you her daughter's address and phone number just in case you ever need a place to stay in Rio), was one of twenty-six competitors, any of whom would have made an exquisite Miss Pancake. Mrs. Figueroa entered this year's contest mainly as a favor to her boss, Joseph Julia (even though she was not sure how certain Cubans would benefit if she emerged victorious). "I don't plan to win, because I don't eat much," she said. "But, you know, if there is an opportunity to win I will take it."

Once, when Linda Barnes was on vacation in Jamaica, some friends pushed her into a beauty contest—she went along with it because she's sort of a daredevil; she goes in for motorcycling and horseback riding, and she has survived root-canal work—and she finished third, but there was no prize for the third-place finisher. That was eleven years ago. A half hour before the Miss Pancake contest got under way, Linda Barnes sat at the bar at Peggy's, working on a glass of clear liquid, hoping to clear her palate, because "the pancake syrup alone can choke you." She spoke from experience; in 1984, Linda Barnes *was* Miss Pancake. This year, her colleagues—she works as a secretary in the import-export business—fully expected her to reclaim the title. You don't just let somebody take a two-and-a-half-hour lunch and then look the other way if she comes back to the office without the Miss Pancake trophy.

For the past forty-four years, Meagan Lloyd has worked steadily as an artist's model. She also has other talents. "I've been a teacher of piano, dancing, elocution, and English," she said. "I once formed a theatrical group with my former husband. Many years ago, in Montreal, I was known as the 'Welsh-Canadian poet-playwright.' My interests are in astrology, theology, criminology, and psychology. My hobby is photography. I've had two poems acknowledged by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and also one by Dwight Eisenhower, my favorite American President."

Meagan Lloyd might have become Miss Pancake 1987, but, as it turned out, she neglected to enter the competition. Margarida Figueroa never stood a chance of becoming Miss Pancake, because she never stopped smiling. You can't smile while ingesting a ten-inch pancake and expect to win. Also, she used a knife and fork. Linda Barnes understood perfectly the strategic need to eat with one's hands, but then she committed a tactical error that cost her precious seconds. "I don't know what happened to me," she said afterward. "But I had to swallow."

Diane Connolly won. Diane Connolly was Miss Pancake 1986, and she is Miss Pancake 1987, because she came to Peggy's Restaurant determined to defend her crown triumphantly. Thirty-two seconds after the contest began, Diane Connolly's plate was clean. "When did I start thinking about this year's competition?" she said. "The day after I won last year. That's when I realized I had talent. I've been in training all year. My main training exercise involved eating hot pizza as quickly as possible. I owe a lot of my success to my parents. I'm one of five children, and in order to get a chance to say something at the dinner table you had to eat fast. I changed jobs last July, and I made sure my contract guaranteed that I would get Shrove Tuesday off. Do I specialize in pancakes? No, you can't specialize in this business. Am I thinking of retiring? Not at all. Now that I've shown what I can do with a pancake, I think I'd like to try some whole meals."

LOOKING FOR LOVE

THE only person Jodi Horton wants to invite to her high-school-graduation party is Eduardo Espada, an illegal alien who works at the gas station near the high school. "That's it?" her stepfather, Lowell, asks. "What about girlfriends from school? What about some of the neighbor kids?" He and Jodi and Jodi's son, Duane, are sitting in the kitchen, having breakfast.

"You mean girlfriend, and she's busy," Jodi says. "I was going to invite the 'Miami Vice' cast, but I was pretty sure they wouldn't come."

"You can even invite teachers, if you want," Lowell tells her. "When I was your age, teachers were the guests of honor at graduation parties."

"Teachers," Jodi says. "Oh, sure." She picks up Duane and carries him into the bedroom to get him dressed. She had Duane when she was fifteen, a year before her mother died in a drowning accident at Mission Beach. Duane's father, an ex-classmate of Jodi's, moved away before the baby was born. Jodi had been too embarrassed to tell him she was pregnant. Now she lives with her stepfather—he and her mother had been married for ten years, and Jodi feels comfortable with him—and her grandmother, her mother's mother, looks after Duane on weekdays, while she is in school.

A little after eight, Lowell drops Duane off at Jodi's grandmother's apartment and then drives Jodi to school. She makes him drive around the block past the gas station. "There he is," she says. "He's eating something and reading a magazine."

"I could use some gas," Lowell says.

"Get it someplace else, then, because I don't want him to think I spend my life following him around," Jodi tells him.

After Lowell drops her off in front of the school, he doubles back and drives up to the full-service island. He gets out of the car and watches as Eduardo checks the oil and fills the gas tank. Eduardo is twenty-two or twenty-three, Lowell figures. As far as he knows, Jodi has never had a real date with Eduardo; he's just met her at the mall a few times, and at San Luis Park.

"Sixteen dollars," Eduardo says.

"Fine. Thanks," Lowell says. He starts the car and lets it idle a couple of minutes while Eduardo waits on another customer, then he pulls out and drives to Sears, where he's the appliance sales manager.

In the evening, Lowell and Jodi attend a service for all the high-school graduates at Jodi's mother's church. It had once been Unitarian, but before Jodi's mother joined, it had been changed and renamed by its members the Church of Innate Goodness and moved to the basement of a Howard Johnson's. After the service, during the refreshment hour, Jodi and Lowell stand outside, on the sidewalk in front of the motel sign, so that Lowell can smoke. "I think some of your mother's friends wanted to talk to you," Lowell says.

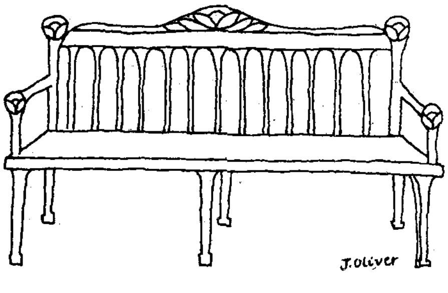
"Well, I can't stand how nice everyone is in there," Jodi tells him. "I can't tell what anyone is really thinking, and I can't swallow this crap about people being so wonderful."

"I think they're just saying that people could be wonderful," Lowell says. He lights another cigarette and takes his wallet out of his back pocket. He shows Jodi his high-school-graduation picture. "This was taken thirty years ago, so don't laugh," he tells her. "This is how everyone looked back then."

"That's pretty hard to believe," Jodi says. She takes out her own wallet and shows Lowell pictures of some of the kids in her homeroom. "They're not exactly friends," she says. "They're just people I've seen around a lot for the past four years."

On the way home, they stop at Jodi's grandmother's apartment to pick up Duane. He's asleep on her bed, and Jodi's grandmother, in a flowered housedress, is in the living room with Jodi's uncle, Mike. He hugs Jodi. "Congratulations, honey," he says. "Good for you." He sits back down and runs his hands over his face.

"Mike lost his cat today," Jodi's grandmother tells them. "His neighbor ran her over in the driveway."



"Why did he do that?" Jodi says.

"Because he didn't see her, I hope," Mike says. "He offered to pay me, so I told him to try and put a price on the head of his best friend." He walks over to the air-conditioner and puts his hand in front of the vent. He's small and thin and is wearing striped work overalls. "What the hell is wrong with this thing?" he shouts. "I thought you just paid through the nose to get it fixed!"

"Duane is sleeping, dear," Jodi's grandmother says.

"I'm sorry," Mike tells her. He sits down on the couch and then stands up again. "I could use a drink. How about a drink, Lowell? Mom? How about a drink?"

"You have one," Lowell says.

"I'm being a terrible hostess," Jodi's grandmother says. She walks into the kitchen and comes back with Mike's drink, a plate of cookies, and a pamphlet about a secretarial school, which she hands to Jodi. "I'd love to see you give this a try," she tells her. "I can picture you behind the desk in a dentist's office."

"Beth Ann really wanted her to go to college," Lowell says. "I went to junior college about a hundred years ago."

"Do you know what school I went to?" Mike asks them.

"The school of life," Jodi and Lowell say.

"O.K. That's right," Mike says.

Jodi places the pamphlet on her grandmother's coffee table. "Eduardo Espada and I will get married, and I'll get a job someplace and have more kids," she tells her grandmother.

THE day of the graduation party is cloudy and hot. Jodi's uncle mows the lawn and trims around the edges with a Weed Eater; Lowell and Jodi's grandmother set up a long table in the back yard and hang multicolored balloons in the fruit trees. They make a big banner that says "CONGRATULATIONS JODI HORTON!" and tack it to the house along the trim above the sliding glass door. Then they put out bowls of chips and Mexican hot sauce.

"How do I look?" Jodi asks. She comes outside wearing a sleeveless pink dress and white high heels. "I think the dress makes me look a little thinner."

"You look great," Lowell tells her.

"Well, I know I don't look great,

I'M A LITTLE OUT OF SORTS TODAY
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but thank you anyway," Jodi says. "I mean, thanks, even if you're lying."

"I'm not lying," Lowell says.

"You wouldn't tell the truth if it hurt someone's feelings, though," Jodi tells him. "Not like some jerks I know."

"How do you always know such terrible people?" Jodi's grandmother says. "All your mother wanted was for you to be around people who loved you."

"I went on to high school," Jodi says.

The guests begin to arrive at four o'clock—two of Jodi's grandmother's friends, the next-door neighbors and a couple from across the street, and three of Lowell's co-workers at Sears. Eduardo shows up late with three candy bars for Duane. He shakes hands with Lowell and puts his arm around Jodi. He's handsome and compact—slightly shorter and thinner than she is.

"Thanks a lot for coming," Jodi tells him. "I was afraid you'd forget or feel weird or something."

"I have the day off anyway," Eduardo says.

Lowell plays tapes on Jodi's portable stereo, and then he brings out his camera and takes pictures. For one of the pictures, Jodi and Eduardo stand on either side of the birdhouse Jodi made in shop. It's three stories tall, each level smaller than the one beneath it. Each story has several carefully cut, round holes. Jodi spent hours after school working on it. She received an A for the semester.

Jodi's grandmother passes around the high-school yearbook for everyone to sign. Mike leaves the party for fifteen minutes and comes back with a wicker basket covered with a towel.

"This is for you and Duane both," he tells Jodi. "I have her sister. I drove over to the pound yesterday and picked them out."

"This is really cool," Jodi says. She picks up the cat and kneels down to show it to Duane. "It's really a great present, Uncle Mike."

Jodi's uncle fastens a red plastic collar around the cat's neck. The collar has little bells on it. "This way," he says, "if you keep your ears open, you can keep track of her every second."

By nine o'clock, it's almost dark, and all the guests have left. Duane has fallen asleep on a blanket in the yard, and the paper banner has ripped and is snapping in the wind. Jodi puts Duane to bed and changes into jeans and a T-shirt. "I'm going out," she tells her grandmother and Lowell, who are in the kitchen, putting away food. "There are about fifteen parties going on. Of course, I'm not invited to them, but I think it will be O.K. if I just show up."

"I thought you said Eduardo was taking you to a movie," Lowell says.

Jodi picks up a container of plastic wrap and slides out five or six inches, slowly pulling it against the serrated edge so that it stretches instead of cuts. "Well, he was talking about wanting to see 'Friday the 13th, Part VI.' "

Lowell makes coffee, and he and Jodi's grandmother take their cups into the den. Jodi's grandmother holds the cat on her lap and watches television, and Lowell leafs through a newsletter called *Looking for Love*. It was how he had met Jodi's mother, ten years earlier. "What if I had never answered her ad?" Lowell says. "Or what if she hadn't bothered calling me?"

"You wouldn't be going through all this heartache now," Jodi's grandmother says.

At eleven-thirty, when Lowell is in bed but still awake, he hears Jodi unlocking the front door. He listens to her walk down the hall and hears water running in the bathroom. He gets up to talk to her. He knows that nothing he says will make the slightest difference—what does he know about love except how much it matters?

—JUDY TROY

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Analysts predict the fee would raise $24 million a year, half of which would go to the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration, or USTTA, the agency that promotes visits to the United States by foreigners. Last year an estimated 23 visitors spent about $15 billion in the United States.—*Fresno* (*Calif.*) *Bee*.

Adnan Khashoggi and who else?

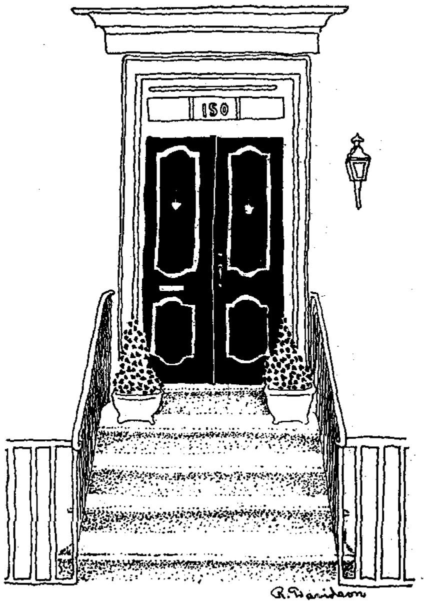
BEARS

MY friend Pauline and I were talking, and she told me about a day she once spent in the country with a lover—how they parked at the side of a road and entered a chilly woods, then came upon an old apple orchard, warm in the sun, where they made love. She said that in that memory she sees her entire self, sees the two of them walk toward the woods as if from the viewpoint of someone facing them—herself in a blue jacket, her hands in the pockets, her face enlivened by some argument she's making.

I objected. I said my memories don't work that way at all, that they're seen from *within*. In important ones—the first time Louis and I kissed, for instance—I always remember just what I heard and saw originally, the appropriate and the incongruous mixed: in the case of the kiss, his wiry dark hair (as in a landscape seen through a network of branches and twigs, because there's a bare tree in the foreground) across the window (behind him) of the art room in the day-care center; then the stained concrete well of the window farther off, and, back inside, orange plastic cups on the sill, full of drying paintbrushes, their soft, trim heads, of different widths, watching us like little interested furry creatures.

I told Pauline that my memories were never like hers, but then, the next day, I found myself just humming a memory along—if you understand what I mean—and then I noticed that in it, sure enough, I am the person being looked at, as if I'm watching a film of myself. There's hair in this one, too. I have long blond hair—a darkish blond, not beautiful but tangled and bushy; my daughters have the same hair, though finer and brighter, because they are children. The memory is of the winter four years ago, when Hilary was nine and Susannah was a year and a half old and was starting at the day-care coöperative. I'd been separated from Carl for a while by then. In the memory, I am about to take Susannah home. It's five o'clock, dark outside, and around us is the mild turmoil of parents sorting out their children's belongings and finding their boots. I am facing into the main room of the day-care center, ready to roll—a big purse on my shoulder, Susannah's fuzzy green blanket under one elbow, and Susannah herself in my arms. She can walk but she is still clumsy, especially in snow. I look short in my wide, puffy gray-and-pink jacket, woven in zigzags. I'm holding Susannah under her arms, her face to mine, and she's in a dark- and light-blue print snowsuit with the hood (which she hates) still down, and pink quilted boots. What you also see of us, along with the two kinds of blond hair and the two kinds of coat, is my forehead (it looks conscientious) above her head, and my car keys already dangling from one of my hands, which is grasping my other hand across Susannah's back. In a moment I will turn and head stalwartly for the door and out into the cold with my big baby, but now I look over Susannah's head at nothing, or at you, the viewer, and I see, examining the memory, that "you" are Louis, the head teacher, the only person still in indoor clothing, who is watching the children with whom he's spent his day being squashed back into the lumpy, complicated shapes—part child, part parent—that bundled themselves in here way back in the morning. When we are gone, Louis will feel the new silence settle around his ears, then walk through it, put on his own brown jacket, lock up, and go home.

Louis had been a student in the Art School at Yale, and when he graduated he'd applied for the job at the coöperative, saying he wanted to stay in New Haven. He'd always wanted to work with kids, and he couldn't sell paintings anyway. When my old friend Pauline started urging me to send Susannah to the coöperative day-care center where her daughter went, she promised that I'd like Louis Feingold. "He's always down on the rug with the kids, stretched out on his stomach," she said. "When I come in, he gets up on one elbow to talk to me. He wears sweaters. He's got lots of wild Jewish hair. He looks like my cousin."



I did like Louis, but I was busy that winter, just keeping track. I had a new job, Hilary spent her afternoons at the houses of three different friends, and on Wednesday afternoons I had to take my turn staffing the day-care center, which meant a special arrangement at work. I was always making a list—and then, with satisfaction, crossing the items out.

One Wednesday we took the whole group to the park, two blocks away. We were a gallant caravan; we had a big stroller for Susannah and another baby, and a yellow wooden wagon for three two-year-olds. The bigger children held on to a frayed clothesline to keep together. Winding slowly along, we made it to the playground, and the kids scattered. There was a father there that day, Don, who stayed near the slide, catching people who came down too fast, and a volunteer from Yale, Lisa, who watched over children on the climbing equipment. Louis and I put six kids into the baby swings, all in a row at the top of the hill, and then stood behind them, giving a push here and there.

It was a windy day in, I think, late February, but the wind was warm, with a loamy smell. The snow was mostly gone and the ground wasn't too wet. It wasn't pretty in the park. It was a brown, rumpled part of the year, with a few withered leaves still on the trees—just veins of leaves, really—but I was exhilarated. I liked not being at work but not being the sole adult at home, either. I wasn't cold, for once. I unzipped my jacket and ran up and down the line of swings, giving a shove to each seat just as it swung back to me, like someone playing a song by tapping Coke bottles. The children laughed.

Louis, who had a woollen muffler around his neck but wasn't wearing a coat, pumped his arms to keep warm. Someone knitted for him, I thought. His heavy sweater with cables up and down it looked handmade, like the scarf. It was brown, with tiny flecks of color.

"I needed my coat after all," he said. "I'm like the kids. The first *really* warm day, I'll take it off somewhere and lose it."

"I'm always piling on sweaters," I said, "just in case."

"You know how if you go into Clark's Dairy in June, there's always one scarf on the coatrack, all gray and grungy?" He poked his chest solemnly. "*My* scarf. Oh, I'll be right back."

I watched him as he loped down the hill—Stephen had fallen off some wooden steps, and Lisa had picked him up. Louis helped her brush Stephen off, and then picked him up for a minute, said something to Lisa, who laughed, and put him down again. Louis's muffler, which had been tucked in, came loose as he trotted back up the hill. "I wish Thursdays were like Wednesdays," he said, winding it around his neck. He walked to the front of the swings and pulled each child forward in turn, up high, and then let go.

"What's wrong with Thursdays?"

"It's not the same," he said. "The parents who work then, Jean and Kathy—well, Jean's a little spacy and Kathy's nervous. And there's no volunteer."

"Maybe you should move Lisa," I said.

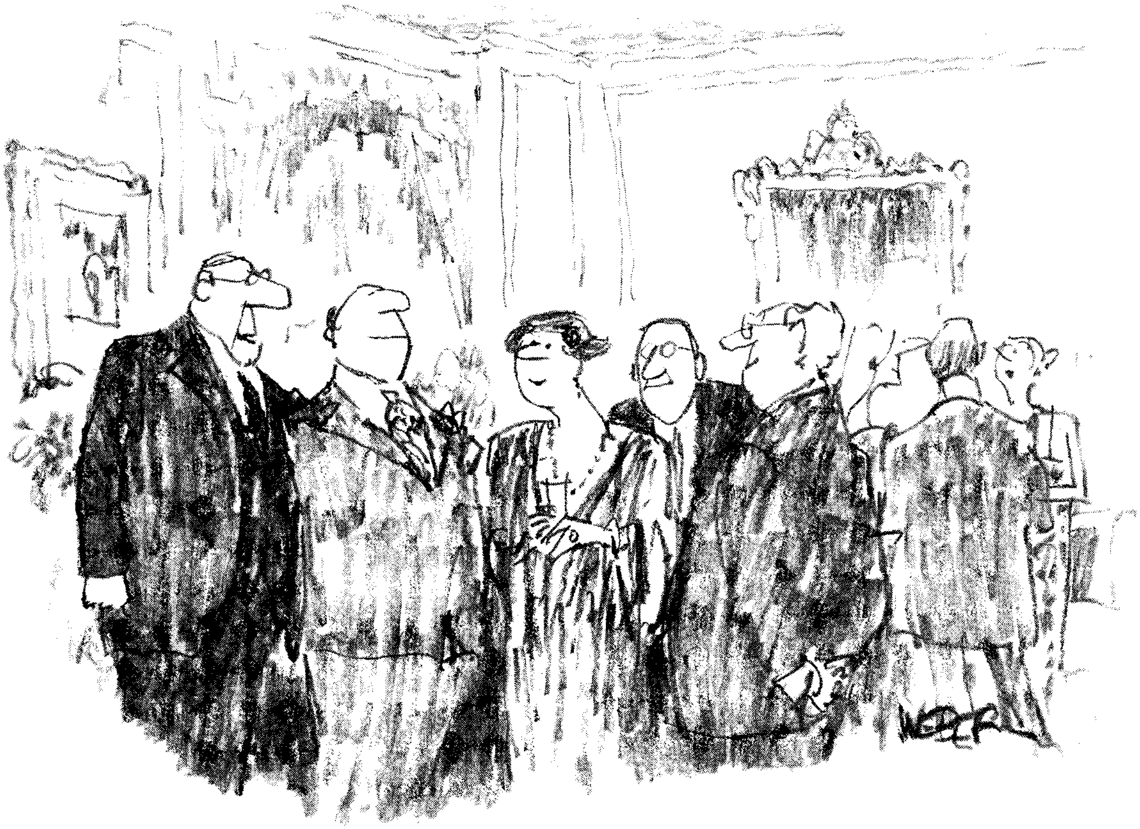
"No, I asked her. She can't. Nobody can change." He grabbed Susannah's legs and backed up as far as he could with her, then let go of the swing. "If we came here on a Thursday," he said, "Jean would wander into the woods and be eaten by wild beasts." He moved off about ten feet down the hill and called out, "Hey, guys, we should head back in a couple of minutes!"

I looked to see whether the children had heard what was going to happen to Jean, but they weren't paying attention. We began lifting them out of the swings, and then we started back, with Louis coming last, pushing the stroller, and me a little way ahead with three bigger kids. Lisa and the wagon were ahead of me, and Don was holding the front end of the rope, taking big, slow steps and singing in a cracked voice, "Here we go back to *day*-care, all on a winter's day!" He's an economics professor at Southern Connecticut.

I tried to remember to walk slowly enough so as not to get ahead of the children, and thought about first learning that walk when Hilary was little. Then it occurred to me that maybe Hilary could be of use to Louis if she came after school on Thursdays. I waited until we were inside the yard and then let Louis catch up, and asked him about it, a little hesitantly. "She's nine," I explained. "She's good with little kids. She could read stories."

He was leaning over the stroller, lifting the babies out, but he straightened up, beaming. "Carolyn, you're a genius," he said. Then he stepped back, as if he needed room, and hugged me—not a personal hug but a public, ceremonial one. His arms went straight out and he held them that way for a second, then stepped forward and wrapped them swiftly around me, as if what I'd said (though I didn't think it was *that* bright) were so smart that I had to be hugged, as if hugs were medals.

I was laughing, of course, but something made me turn away quickly and pick up Susannah. Then, as we pushed the stroller and herded the children back into the building, I saw that it was the remarkable amplitude of my delight at what he'd done that made me shy.


"This is Teddy Bonesteel. Teddy is rapidly becoming competitive with Japan."

• •

STILL, we didn't become lovers until May. Hilary went to day-care, gladly, every Thursday, and taught songs to the three- and four-year-olds; Louis told me she made a big difference. On Wednesdays, we went to the park more often. I was awkward with Louis, though—I was thinking about him a good deal, I noticed—but then I saw that he was the same, and I thought I knew what would happen one day when Carl had taken Hilary and Susannah overnight and I agreed to meet Louis at five and help him straighten up the art supplies.

Then I decided I'd been wrong, because as we worked, sorting the children's paintings, he told me about a woman he'd loved—"Mary Elizabeth," he said slowly, with a tiny pause between the names—who was married. He'd known her for two years; she'd been an art student with him, and they used to take anguished coffee breaks together. When Louis told me this, I thought that he just wanted me for a confidante, and the art room looked less colorful as I made silent plans about how to comfort myself when I was alone. I'd start reading a new book I'd bought, and take a bath, and call Pauline . . .

But Louis, who was standing on a low chair taping a finger painting to the wall with masking tape, went on talking. "It's different now," he said, and stepped down and stood back to admire the painting, which showed a face outlined in orange with a shaggy sunburst all around it. It could have been an animate sun, I thought, or possibly a man with a beard. "You can't lie to yourself around kids," he said. "Probably it's always been a fantasy."

Now I understood that, in telling me about Mary Elizabeth, Louis had been engaging in full disclosure, as I think the Truth-in-Lending statute calls it. We put all the scissors into one cigar box, and cleaned the paintbrushes, and then, at last, got around to kissing.

THE PATIENCE OF WHITE BIRCHES

Because they come up
among others, shyly
among thin oaks and maples
in old fields they're
taking back, we barely
see them. It is only
on lawns of farmhouses
saved from failure
by aluminum coats
colored Swiss Peach or
Brownbread that we
notice their ornamental
docility, how they
stir among themselves,
and on drive-in aprons
where rust has worked
across the screen
how they seem to stand
at ease, awaiting whatever
voice can crackle
a movie speaker back to
life and stiffen their
spines with marching
orders. Last night
in the Berkshires, they
leaned way over the
highway, looking white-faced
down into the falling rock
zones, and off in the dark
stood like hairline
faults of frost
driven through stone, nodding
among themselves, seeming
to say, *Not by peeling*
for canoes ever again,
but by rocks kicked into
gorges one at a time,
by learning the patience of
rust. Soon it may take
only one spring.

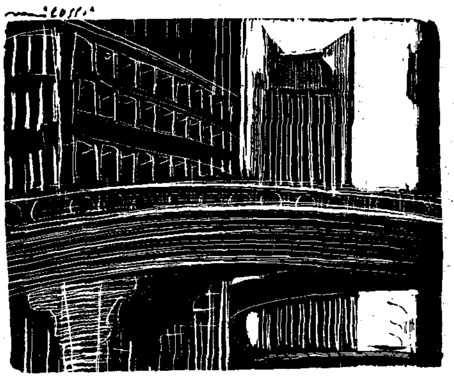
—Brendan Galvin

• •

IT was good, being with Louis. He'd come over and we'd care for the children together, or I'd get a sitter and we'd go to his apartment for the evening. By August he was sleeping over at my place several nights a week, and we were talking about living together. Then the children and I spent a weekend with him at his parents' summer cottage in the Adirondacks.

All I had known about Mr. and Mrs. Feingold, before we went, was that his mother knitted his scarves and sweaters. I had been worried that they'd disapprove of me—Hilary was sometimes rude, Susannah wasn't toilet trained, we're not Jewish—though Louis kept telling me that they wouldn't be whatever I'd been picturing. Actually, his father was exactly as I'd imagined him, except that he couldn't resist children, and he was trading riddles with Hilary moments after we arrived. Louis's mother matter-of-factly assigned Louis and me to a double bed—something else I'd worried about—and quickly told me that she only knitted between books. She was a translator, it turned out, who worked on technical books in German and Dutch. She glared at me briefly when I complimented her on her knitting, as if she'd caught me hoping for a sweater during the book season, and then told me about her current project, a Dutch entomology textbook. "I don't suppose you know Dutch?" she said, but then shook her head firmly when I said no. "Of course not—just because you're blond. It would be too much to expect."

We were outside their cottage, being shown the lake, admiring the mountains, dark with evergreens. "At first I was leery about this book," said Miriam Feingold. "You know, the Netherlands—so damp. I thought they'd have disgusting insects, like centipedes. Every book I translate comes into my dreams. But it's mostly anatomy, and it doesn't have to do with Dutch insects in particular. Now that I think about it, I can't imagine *any* bugs in Holland. It doesn't seem like a buggy place at all." As she spoke, she was yanking beach towels off the clothesline and draping them, folded once lengthwise, over her left arm. "You wouldn't know, would you?"



Again I had to say no. Miriam looked a little disappointed. She also seemed puzzled when she learned that I'm a paralegal but that I don't want to go to law school, though Louis's unambitious life seemed to delight her. Nonetheless, I saw that she was a person you could argue with, and we made friends. Only one bad thing happened that weekend. The second evening, we were all outside the house after supper—there was a little lawn, with a few chairs—and suddenly Hilary seized Susannah's hand and ran across the road with her in the twilight, without looking. She must have forgotten it wasn't a driveway but a real road, though with little traffic. A car was coming, in fact, but it was far away, and the children were never in danger. I wasn't too upset—I was more concerned that Hilary would be embarrassed at her mistake—but Louis, who'd raced across after them and held their hands until the car had passed, couldn't seem to forget the incident. At breakfast he said, "Hill, I'm sorry, but I need to talk about you know what—last night—again."

"I *did* look," said Hilary.

"I wish you didn't need to see it that way," said Louis. "Nobody's angry. You were a little out of control. It happens to me, too." He pushed his chair back and stood up, holding his coffee mug, pausing on the way to the stove. "I guess it bothers me because you had Susannah. Damn it, Hill, all I want is to talk about how scared *I* am, at times—you know, being the person in charge of little kids."

His father, who had walked into town for the *Times* early in the morning, now raised his head from it, his coffee mug to his lips, and looked out at us from under his hair—all over the place, like his son's hair, but gray and thinner.

"I take good care of my sister," said Hilary.

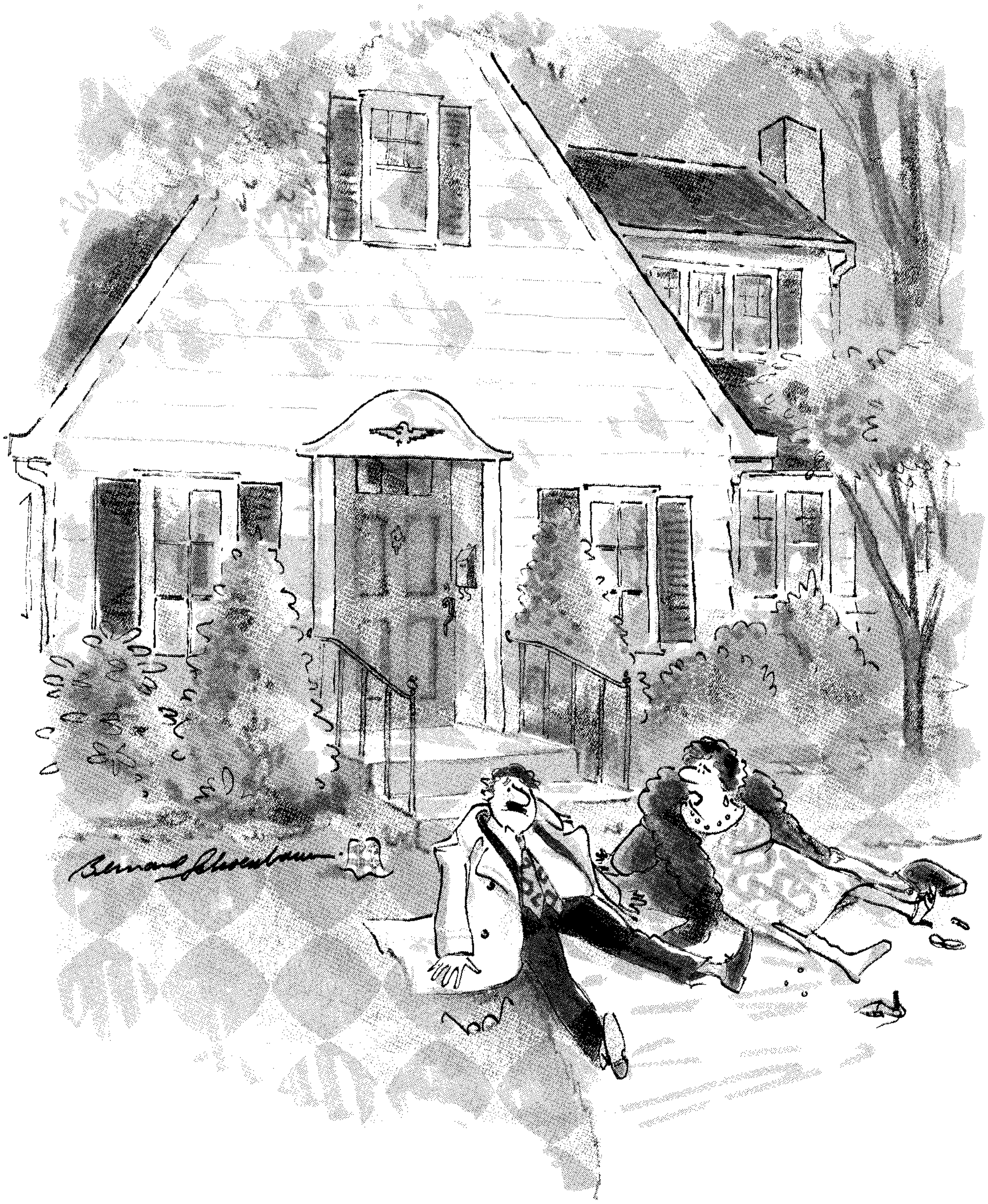
"Louis, lay off it," I said. "She's *nine*."

"You're right," said Louis. "She's so good on Thursday afternoons I forget she isn't twenty."

That helped. "I'm glad Louis met you," Miriam said to me later, as we came back from a walk. She'd shown me some blackberry bushes in a sunny place along the road, and we'd filled a saucepan, reaching across the bristly canes for the best berries, the big shiny ones. "I hope you're not too smart for him," she said.

"Louis is smart!" I said, shocked.

"Of course," said Miriam.



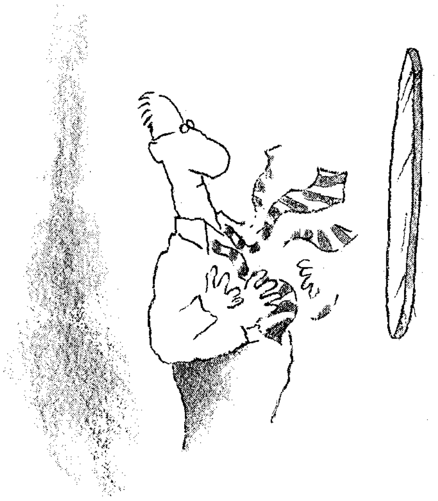
"I tried to tell you we were overstaying our welcome."

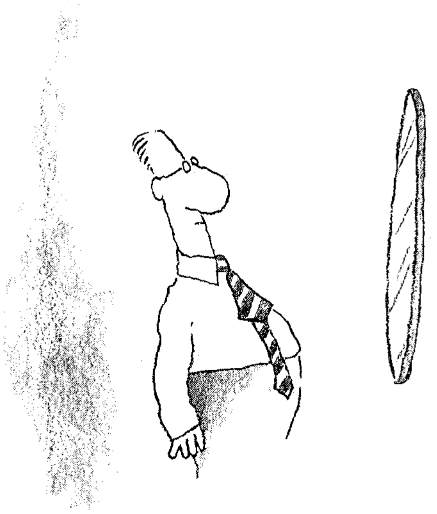
• •

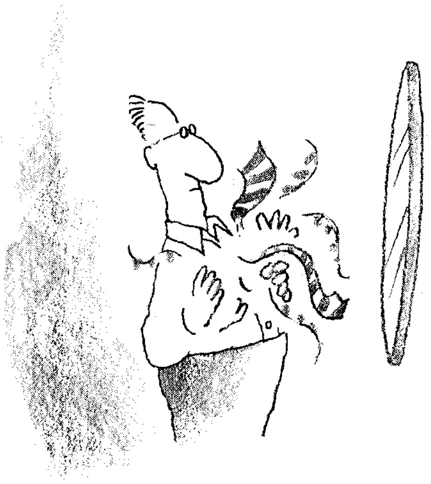
LOUIS came to my house in the brown cable-knit sweater on a cold, rainy Sunday evening in late September. My kitchen was warm and steamy, for I'd been cooking—revelling in cooking, because it was the first day cold enough to hover around the stove. He began pulling the sweater up over his head as he followed me in. I hadn't seen him for a few days. He'd been painting, and I'd had to bring work home from the office. He kissed me more passionately than he usually did on nights the children were home. Then he put the sweater down on the nearest chair and sat down heavily on the next one, which was odd—usually he stood near me and talked for a few minutes while I cooked, and then he tore lettuce or scraped carrots. I had stewed a chicken and now I was breaking green beans to put into the pot. He didn't say anything for a minute, and then he said, "Tropical rain forest in here." I had spider plants in front of both kitchen windows, and the windows were fogged up. "Is everything all right?" he said then.

"Sure," I said. "I had a good day. I did laundry, and I baked gingerbread. I can't remember whether you like gingerbread."

"Sure I do," he said. Then he said, "Carolyn, there are some things I need to talk about," and that sounded bad, but just then Susannah came groggily into the kitchen, her face red and damp, with one strap of her overalls dangling down her back. She'd fallen asleep on the living-room rug at five, and late naps made her cranky. I picked her up and held her on my hip, trying to do the beans with my free







hand, but she cried, and finally I lowered the flame under the chicken and sat down to button her overalls and cuddle her. "Start some rice, would you?" I said to Louis.

The doorbell rang. Louis went to answer it with the box of rice in his hand, and it was Hilary, who'd been across the street at a friend's. She followed him back in, talking, and he cooked the rice while Susannah calmed down, and then we ate, but he and I weren't alone again until supper was over and the children were in bed. Finally I came out of their room. Louis was washing the dishes. All evening, of course, I'd been trying to imagine what he would say, and I'd decided the likeliest thing was that he wanted to quit his day-care job. That would be upsetting, because we saw each other there a lot, and it would be bad news for Susannah and the other children. But while I was giving Susannah her bath, I realized that this possibility wasn't bad enough. After all, if Louis left day-care we could still see each other—we could live together, in fact; he'd said he didn't think it would be good for him *or* Susannah to be together twenty-four hours a day, and so he and I had renewed our separate leases. It must be that he was quitting and leaving New Haven, I concluded—that *would* be bad.

"I don't know if I was ever straight with you, Carolyn," he said now, turning away from the sink. I sat down at the kitchen table. The yellow paper napkins we'd used were still there, and I began tearing the one in front of me, making a fringe around its edge. Louis leaned on the sink. He had a cup of coffee and every now and then he took a sip. I began to hurt inside.

"I know I tried to explain to you," he said, "that there had been somebody else . . ." He paused, and I nodded quickly, like a child who's being told bad news and pretends it isn't getting to him.

Then he was quiet for a time, and then he said, "Mary Elizabeth called me."

"When?" I said.

"Last week," he said. "Maybe two weeks ago. Two weeks ago at the most."

"What did she want?"

"Well," he said. "Well, it's not that she wanted something. It's not that. It's just . . . Well, she's thinking about leaving Tom."

"Louis—" I said. "I can't believe this. You come here and tell me that Mary Elizabeth is thinking of leaving Tom?" I started to cry. "What's that to us?"

"Nothing," he said quickly. "Nothing. I mean, I *think* nothing. Very likely nothing. But Carolyn, I have to sort this out, don't I?"

I said, "Louis, are you breaking up with me?"

"No," he said. "I'm not. Well, maybe. I just think we need some sort of change until I figure this out. Oh, Carolyn, I'm still not being straight with you." He turned from the sink, leaving the remaining dishes, and walked to the window with his coffee cup and looked out at the darkness. He must have seen nothing there but his own reflection through the fronds of the spider plant.

"I'd have sworn it wouldn't matter who called me up," he said. "I wasn't thinking about her. And then, when she did—well, it was a big thing. I . . . I saw her, last week. I'm sorry. It scared me. I'm scared."

I wasn't going to ask whether they'd slept together, because I knew he'd tell me the truth. Besides, to say it would be to imagine it. "There's no Mary Elizabeth!" I shouted. "I don't believe in her. There *is* no Mary Elizabeth."

"I'm afraid there is," he said, turning around. I cried, and he came up behind me, put the cup down, and held my shoulders, and then I got up and walked into the living room. I didn't want to talk about it anymore until I'd had a chance to be alone, but he sat down, so I took off my shoes and sat down on the sofa. Then he got up and sat down again, and then he said, "Did Pauline tell you what happened Thursday?"

It seemed a strange time to talk about Pauline or Thursday. "No," I said. "I haven't talked to Pauline all weekend."

"I thought you must know about it and be mad at me."

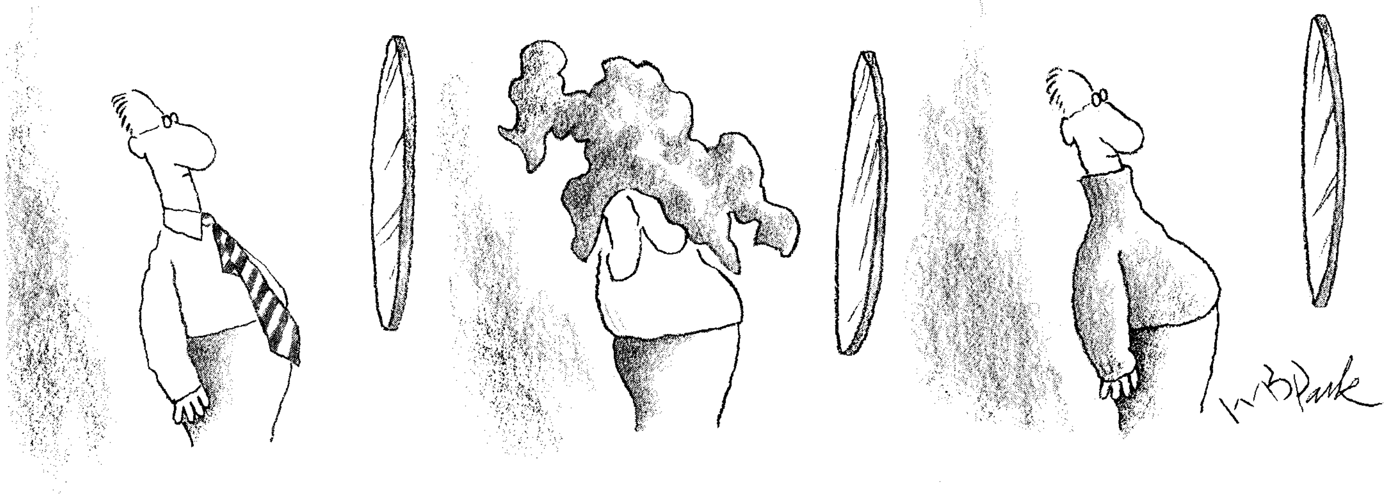
"What do you mean?" I said. I tried to remember what the current day-care hassle was—there was always something—but I was too upset to care. I was cold, too. My feet were cold, so I sat on them.

"I didn't see it," he said, "which was negligent. Pauline's angry with me and she's right."

"Pauline's angry with you?"

"I'm sure this will come up at a meeting," he said. "But the main thing is, it has to do with Hilary."

"What *happened*?" I said.



"Well, of course Hilary was at day-care on Thursday," he said. "And Rita came to pick up Josh a little early." Josh was a four-year-old who'd recently joined. Rita, his mother, was a hardworking member—she'd made curtains for the nap room—but she was a little *too* energetic, I sometimes thought.

"Apparently she saw Josh in the reading corner with Heather and Stephen and Jessica—all the four-year-olds. Hilary was telling them stories. And as Rita heads over there Pauline comes in and they stop to talk, but I guess they can hear Hilary, and she's making up *horror* stories—about kids with their names getting captured, I think by wild animals. And the kids are looking nervous. So Rita bawled out Hilary and told the kids not to pet strange dogs or something. And Pauline found me—I was in the art room, cleaning up—and gave me hell. For not checking. I don't know. I'm surprised Hilary would do that. She must have felt terrible when Rita yelled at her. But do you think she's—I don't know—troubled? To focus on violence like that? And the kids—I'd hate to have Rita and the rest yank their kids out. I've been worried about this all weekend." He stood up and sat down again. "I was sure Pauline came straight over here and said something."

I almost laughed at the thought of Rita, whom, I decided, I didn't like, discovering what was going on, but I told myself wearily that I shouldn't make light of it, that Louis thought it was important. I'd caught Hilary scaring Susannah once with a story about a wolf, but it hadn't occurred to me that she'd try it at day-care. Still, I was so upset already that after telling myself I'd talk to Hilary—and Rita and Pauline—I forgot about it.

"Louis broke up with me," I said the next evening, as soon as Pauline and I were alone in her kitchen. I'd called her at her office and said I needed to come over later; I could stand it, I thought, if I could talk about it. Now Susannah was playing with Pauline's daughter, Iris, and Hilary was on the living-room rug doing homework and eating a carrot. Pauline was standing at the stove scooting chopped meat and onions around in a pan for spaghetti sauce, and I was watching her.

"I don't believe it," she said.

I told her what had happened. She kept looking at me and shaking her head. "I even hate her *name*," I finished. "Nobody's called 'Mary Elizabeth' anyway. If she were a reasonable human being, wouldn't it at least be 'Mary Beth'?"

"Of course," said Pauline.

"Or it would be slurred," I said. "He says it so clearly, as if it's so *important*."

I cried then, and she put her arm around me and gave me a glass of wine and invited us all to stay for supper. "I didn't think this would happen," she said. "I like Louis. I thought he was a grownup."

That made me remember the last part of my conversation with him. "He says you're mad at him."

"Well, of course."

"No—I forgot. He says you're mad because Hilary scared the four-year-olds."

"Oh, *that*," she said. "I thought I'd wait for the principals to tell you before I did, and then I just forgot about it."

"Well, Hilary hasn't said a word," I said. "And Louis was a little garbled."

"This may cause a minor uproar at day-care," said Pauline. "Rita put it on the agenda for the meeting, but I thought it was funny. Here's this winning little scene, with Hilary spinning yarns"—she lowered her voice—"and suddenly I hear her clearly and she's saying, 'So the giant ate up Josh's arms and legs, and the bear had the rest of him.' "

I laughed, though my face was still wet from crying. Then I said, "Were the kids upset?"

"Actually, I think they liked it. They were probably more worried by Rita's lecture. I really lost it, though. Rita was blaming Hilary—the worst of this is that Rita yelled at Hilary—and I got mad at Rita, and mad at *Louis* for letting Hilary get into trouble. That's farfetched, but I let him have it. You know me. I'd call him and apologize, but not now."

"Pauline," I said, "do you think there's something wrong with Hilary—that she'd do it? Do I have to pack away my broken heart and worry about my kid?"

"No," said Pauline. "Kids say things. Louis has been expecting too much of her."

"He thinks she's an adult." I remembered what happened at his parents' place. "I guess he's upset."

"He didn't know what to do when I yelled at him," said Pauline. "He was washing the art-room floor. He had

THE MUSIC OF LOST HOURS

On Sundays after Mass, the bells tolling
slowly over Alexandria
call down evening once again through the late
underwater light of winter afternoon.
The shuttered dust of boredom filters down,
and once again another weekend laps
another week. The music of lost hours
circling from the center of the city
stitches up the stillness. Swallows, threading
and threading the eye of the quiet steeple,

spiral down at last to nest in the dark
of the bell-puller's parlor. Then, far off,
a tug struggling upriver drones its one
held note against the darkness falling
in folds, drifting like smoke along the piers.
Before the day gives out, you drive the car
to sandpiles banking the river's edge. The dusk
is hung with gulls slipping the drafts of air
above barges groaning under garbage
and trailing plumes of steam behind their sterns.

Each wake widens in ribbons toward both shores,
while the light from a single lantern nudges forward
and blinks blue on the snub-nosed bow. Though the air
is strewn with sulfur now, a stiff breeze lifts
my brothers' hair, and you can almost smell
your youth in the dank tide where waves receding
leave the humped mud briefly glinting silver.
Sand flats ripple off under winter wind
whose scent is tar and cinders, while the gulls
dive and rise from the river's random flashings.

Further, above the razor-line of water,
pale shapes of prison towers float in the fog.
There, through dust-suspended afternoons,
you score the air with elementary grammar
while absent-minded fingers trace a name
in a desk top and carve the signature
of one man's silence with blunted pencils.
The light falling through windows webbed with bars
and pooling on concrete floors might as well
be darkness because it never changes.

Water rots in the iron pail
like bile or urine when an inmate scours
the cracked enamel of the drinking fountains,
the tiled hallways, the windows stitched with wire.
Every time you turn you see yourself reflected
in the flat light caught in a prisoner's eyes.
Though even then a human face, netted
in shadows thrown from barren limbs of trees
that scribe the shimmered glass like leaden traceries,
will never move you like the incensed air
of Sunday. Father, nearly twenty years
have passed since then. Introspected and as still
as that moment the bells stopped ringing,
you leaned between the headlights to smoke awhile
and watched the gulls redeem the daylight
shifting its flecks of flame on darkening waves
of water. Twenty years—your last summer—
and in your garden the fragile script of grass
on open ground, fastidious and stiff
as your own hand, is proof you're gone.

Baseball, the papers, and the Catholic Church—
for years, for you, the kindest consolation.
Beneath an evening sky I see you turning
the dark earth over with a flathead spade.
Your shadow falls across the furrowed dirt,
and the dusk in the trees sifts down slowly.
Or standing on the banks of the black Potomac,
mesmerized by the glow of fogbound halos
burning in darkness overhead as the bow lamp
of the last barge slides through the harbor buoys.

—JOHN HARNEY

• •

that huge mop with the strings going in every direction, and he looked as if he'd been snared in it. Oh!" She turned around. "Carolyn!"

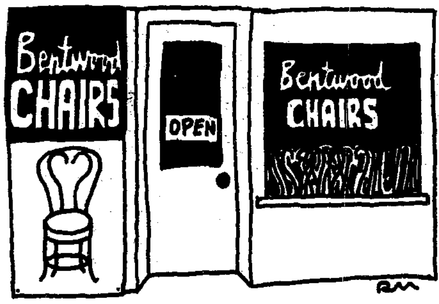
"*What?*"

"Is this my fault, for yelling at him? Do you think he broke up with you out of *embarrassment?*"

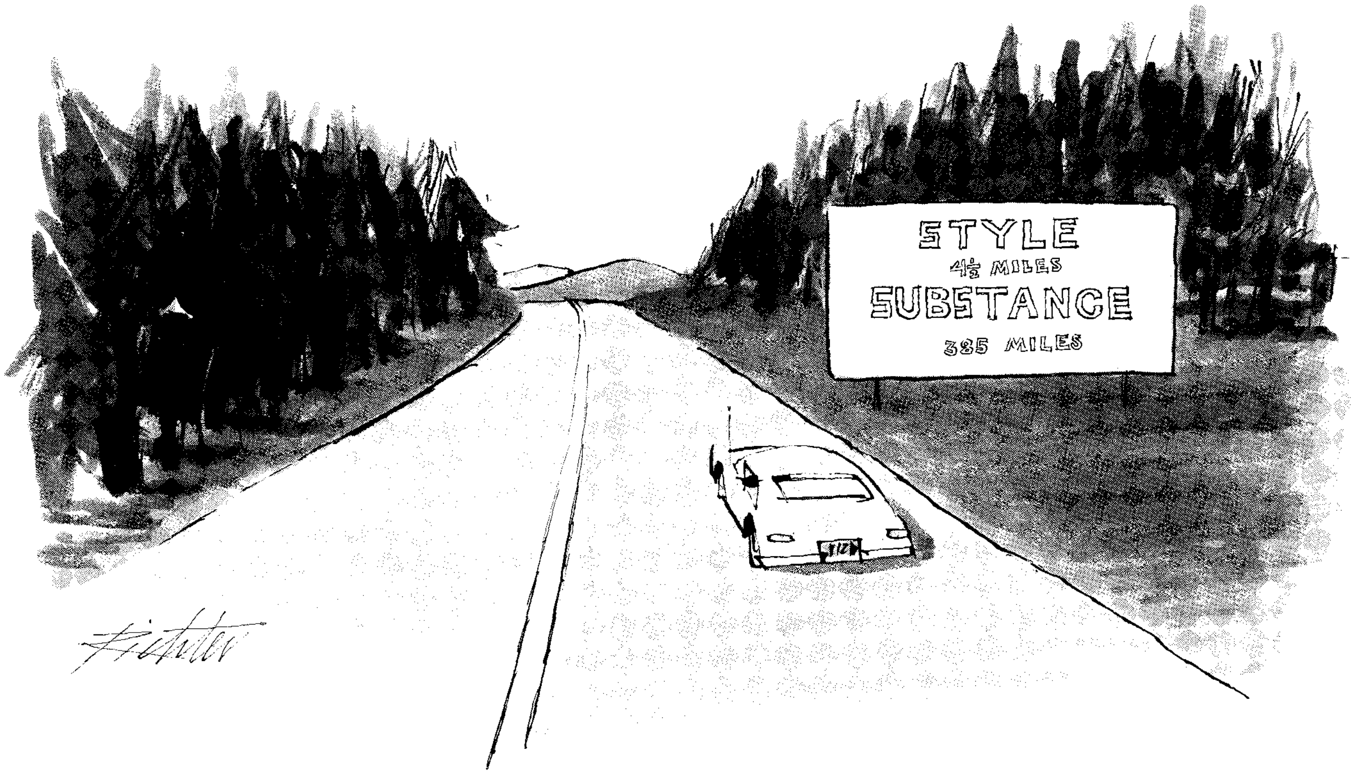
I couldn't help it, I laughed. "Were you very fierce?" I said. I'd been yelled at by Pauline once or twice, and I knew how it felt.

"Pretty fierce, but he *knows* me."

I remembered Louis saying he was scared, Sunday night, but he'd said it, of course, about Mary Elizabeth. I didn't know whether Louis was the sort of person who could be scared away by—by just *things*, the things that happen. "Maybe he thinks if he hangs around me and my kids the bears will get *him*," I said. I didn't know—but of course it was Mary Elizabeth I was thinking about. About her and about how I'd have to work my turn with Louis on Wednesday, and how the bottom drawer of my dresser was filled with his socks and underwear and a shirt and a pair of pajamas. Sometimes, these months, I'd forgotten and opened it, looking for the sweaters I used to keep in it before I knew Louis, and I'd always liked that—being stopped, especially on the mornings he wasn't there (behind me, naked from the shower, reaching for his own clothes), by his possessions, which all seemed right for him: the ordinary tan pajamas, frayed at the wrists, as if he'd somehow found pajamas that had his name, or his message, all over them.



In the next weeks, everything gave me trouble: dropping off Susannah or picking her up, seeing Louis at day-care, or not seeing him. I managed to change my arrangement at work so I could be at day-care on Monday mornings, when Louis taught a painting class at Albertus Magnus College and didn't come. We saw each other, and he even came to dinner now and then, but it seemed we weren't supposed to sleep together until he'd fig-



• •

ured out how he felt about Mary Elizabeth—or until *she* figured out how she felt about Tom. It also appeared that I wasn't supposed to ask questions. He'd hold me by the upper arms and kiss me sorrowfully.

I didn't attend the day-care meeting at which Hilary's scary story was discussed, but, according to Pauline, nothing much happened. Rita was still angry. Everyone tried to reassure her, and Louis apologetically agreed he should supervise Hilary more closely, and then offered to take the children to look at the chipmunks and raccoons at the West Rock Nature Center, so they wouldn't be afraid of animals. "They make up scary stories all the time, on their own," someone pointed out. Hilary never would talk about what had happened, though nobody blamed her and everyone told her they were glad she worked at day-care. A few weeks later, though, she said she wanted to take drama after school, and the class met on Thursdays, so that was that. "I helped enough," she said.

"*Has* Mary Elizabeth left Tom?" I said once, to Pauline. "You'd think I could know that much."

"We could call her up and ask her."

"I don't know her last name," I said.

"How about a personal ad? There must be people who know all about it. 'Can anyone tell us whether Mary Elizabeth has left Tom?' "

"Don't you know any artists?" I said. "And don't all artists know all *other* artists?"

Pauline is a social worker, but she has all sorts of friends. "I know musicians," she said thoughtfully. "I know a potter. . . . Let me think about it."

In November I got a phone call from Miriam Feingold. "I want you to trace your children's hands," she said. I had a sudden leap of the heart: a love charm!—but no, she was between books and was knitting mittens for Hilary and Susannah. "For Christmas," she said. "Chanukkah. Whatever."

I thanked her.

"I'm sorry about you and Louis," she said, "but I refuse to pretend I don't know you. Sometimes I think that's what the men I know are *for*—to introduce me to interesting women, whom they then ditch. Though I didn't expect it of Louis."

I was pleased to hear that I was interesting.

"Don't give up on him," she went on. "You know, that's just what I used to say to his teachers. But it's true. Eventually, he pulls things together."

"Do you *think* so?" I said, but she turned apologetic. "Oh, I know, I'm his mother. Don't listen to *me*," she said.

It was hard to persuade Susannah to have her hand traced, but Hilary was interested, and at last Susannah, too, lowered her palm warily onto the paper. At first I outlined their hands with the fingers spread, and it was lovely guiding the pencil past each joint of each of their fingers. After I'd drawn in their nails and the little lines on their knuckles, I realized that of course Miriam only needed tracings with the fingers together and the thumbs out, mitten style, so I had to persuade Susannah all over again. The hands were on one big sheet of paper, and I found a big envelope and sent the whole thing off to her. A few weeks later, the mittens came—purple with lavender thumbs for Hilary, and lavender with purple thumbs for Susannah. Miriam had also made me a vest, in a gray-blue yarn that frizzled all over into a soft cloud. I wore it, under or on top of another sweater, all winter—a hard winter for me—even though I looked fat in so many layers.

ONE Friday in February the day-care held a potluck supper at Don and Marjorie's house. I always made myself go to gatherings like that, whether Louis went or not, so I signed up to bring a dessert, and, the night before, I baked brownies. Don and Marjorie's house is small, and it was crowded when I arrived. I made my way through the group with my pan of brownies and my daughters, and we found a place to put our coats and then filled our paper plates with lasagna and salad. In those days I was sensitive to Louis's presence, and from the moment we came in I had felt that he was in the dining room. Sure enough, he was talking to Don, leaning against a wall and eating. We passed them with our plates, and Louis stretched out a hand behind him, not turning his head, to touch my arm. We hadn't talked for a week—he'd started a conversation at five o'clock one day, when I was picking up Susannah, but a moment later someone called him away.

Pauline and another woman were in the living room, and I joined them. I was feeling bad and I didn't say anything, I just ate. They were discussing a recruitment poster—we were having a membership drive—but then the other woman went back to the dining room for seconds.

"I know something," said Pauline to me at once, "but I don't know whether it's good or bad, so maybe you don't want to talk about it."

"Tell me," I said.

"I know about Mary Elizabeth and Tom," she said. "It turns out that Tom is a social worker. He works for the state. I even *know* him. I mean, he's one of a couple of guys in that office I always mix up."

"How do you know Tom is the right Tom?" I said.

"A woman in my office—Karen—wants his job," she said. "His last name is Frederick. Karen told me Tom Frederick may move to New Jersey, because his wife, an artist, is already down there, and I immediately although discreetly asked her name, and it's the same woman. It's her."

"So she did leave him."

"She left him. She moved to New Jersey, but . . . Well, Karen said there was somebody else, who was here."

Now I got scared that Louis would move to New Jersey, but then I remembered that *Tom* was moving to New Jersey.

"But they're getting back together?" I said.

"According to Karen, they're not sure. I didn't like the sound of them, frankly. Wishy-washy. As if they'll never settle it."

"But he's moving down there?"

"Probably."

"You mean she hasn't been in New Haven for *months*?"

I'd been afraid of meeting her everywhere. Once, I'd been convinced—for no reason—that a woman ahead of me in the dentist's waiting room, who looked arty and confident, was Mary Elizabeth, and then I'd been cheerful all day after the hygienist stuck her head out and called her Jennifer.

Now Don came around with a jug of Burgundy and poured some into our paper cups. Pauline and I toasted Mary Elizabeth and Tom's marriage, and then we toasted Karen's new job, but I was faking my glee a little, because New Jersey wasn't far enough away.

"Did you see the drawings?" said Louis then, marching up to Pauline and me—we'd changed the subject not a moment too soon. "In the art room. They take up every inch of wall."

The drawings, he said, were life-size outlines of the children themselves. He'd gotten hold of a huge roll of butcher paper, and the children had taken turns lying down on it while other children crawled around them, tracing around their bodies. Then they colored in the faces, hair, and clothes.

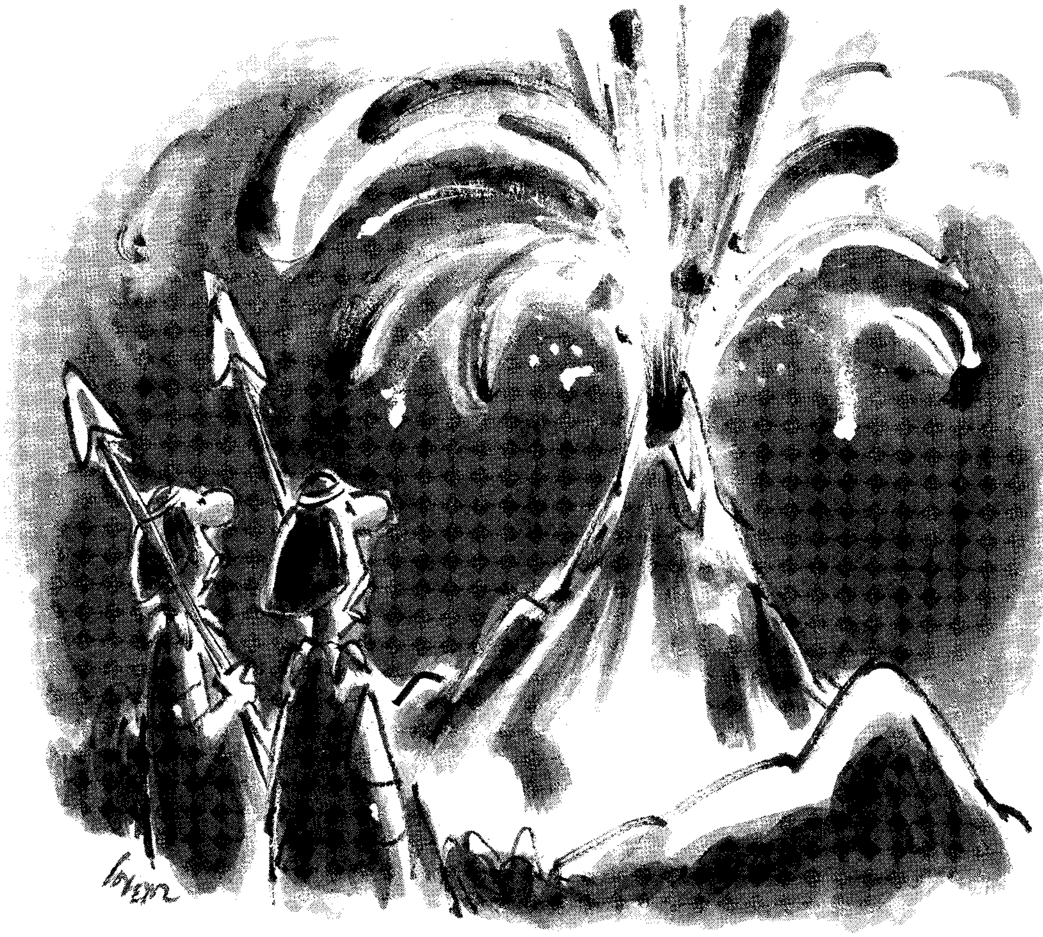
"Wait till you see Susannah's," he said to me.

"Did she *let* you?" I asked. "I traced her hand, and she was afraid."

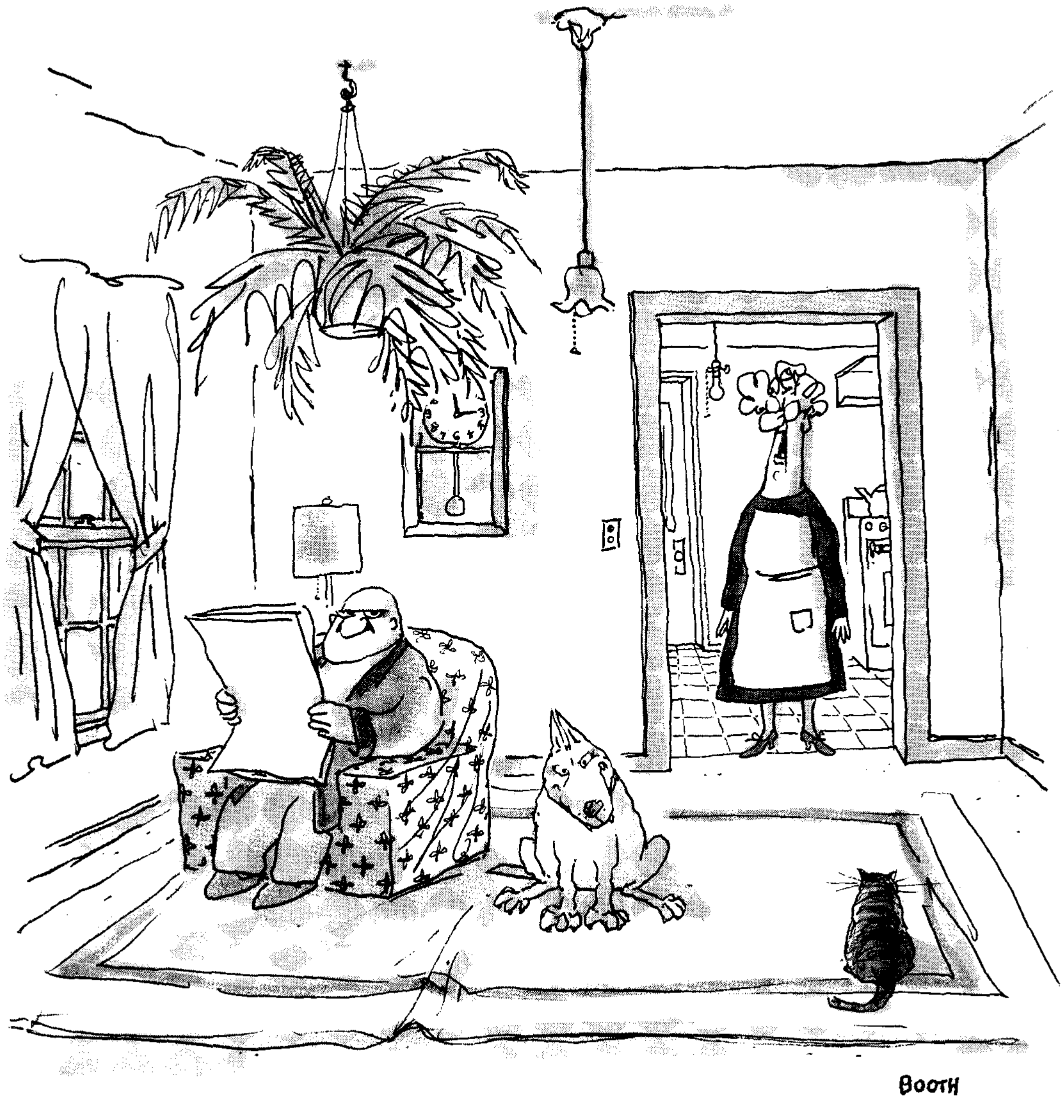
"It was hard," he said. "Two-year-olds think it's magic—if you trace them, you *get* them. But she was all right. Maybe now that she's a little older . . ."

I hadn't said how long ago I had traced Susannah's hand, and I wondered whether he knew about it.

"Besides, I was the first victim," he went on. "I lay down and let them trace me." He held his arms and legs a little out, like a gingerbread man. "It was strange," he said. "I lay there looking up at the ceiling



"The gods seem in touch with their anger tonight."



"What happened to one o'clock?"

of the art room, trying not to move, and all their crayons kept tickling me here and there—their hands were holding me still, all up and down me. And then do you know what they did? They colored me in naked."

"They *did*?" said Pauline, with a laugh. I had stopped worrying about New Jersey and was interested.

"Of course it didn't matter with my face," said Louis, "but they gave me a regular *forest* of chest hair, and a belly button, and pubic hair yet, and a penis."

"Did they draw themselves naked?" said Pauline.

"No, only me. They couldn't make long lines, so my outline is a million tiny lines in different colors—a red hand and an orange arm, but my hair is brown. I look shaggy and I'm very large—I take up the whole wall opposite the doorway. I look like an abominable snowman or a brown bear, but I have a big smile."

"I can't wait to see this," said Pauline.

"Oh, but listen to what happened then," said Louis. "Rita came to get Josh, and she came into the art room and admired everything, and then she took me aside and very seriously said to me, 'Louis, you didn't *pose* like that, did you?' "

"Oh, that's wonderful," I said. "What did you answer?"

"This is terrible," said Louis. "I told her I did."

Pauline and I laughed, but Louis said, "That was bad." And then he looked across the room to where Rita was talking with a group of people and drinking wine. She wasn't far away at all, but Louis rested one hand on my shoulder and one hand on Pauline's, rose up on tiptoe, and then raised the hand that had been on Pauline's shoulder. "Rita!" he called. And as he did it (his other hand still touching me) I felt something become new, though I don't know why. It was like watching a movie when the projectionist brings it into sharper focus. Suddenly, everything is a little less fuzzy, while voices are a bit more distinct, though a moment later you can't say what has been altered. A woman named Jane was coming toward us and smiling, and someone behind us was calling, "Dessert!," and I knew something, just then, about Louis—central Louis, that crisply drawn person (we each must have one) who's hardly ever visible through the blur. I knew Louis wasn't a silly man who loved Mary Elizabeth but a sensible man who loved me.

Rita turned around, looking anxious. "Rita!" said Louis. "I lied! I lied! I'm sorry." Then he sank back on his heels, and his voice, which had been a little antic, became lower and more natural. "I really *am* sorry."

She stared, and then she understood and laughed. I liked her for the first time—for not pretending to understand until she did. She turned away, blushing slightly, and turned back and called in a friendly voice, "I *thought* you might be making it up."

Louis turned back to us, took his hand off my shoulder, and, as if he'd been trying to work the information in somewhere but couldn't, said quickly to me—I remember myself standing there, a short blond woman squeezed between him and Pauline, holding a paper cup of red wine, wearing a blue vest—"I found the pictures of your children's hands, in my parents' apartment. I kept them."

—ALICE MATTISON

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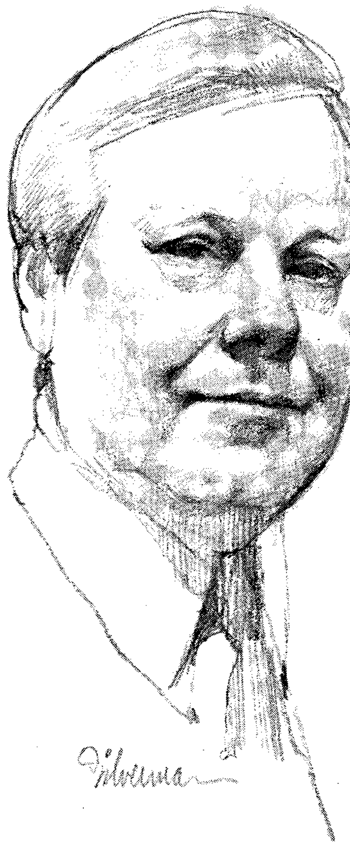
HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT

[*Headline in the Parkersburg* (*W. Va.*) *News*]

RAY CHARLES: A ROCKER WELL BEFORE HIS PREDECESSORS

PROFILES

COLORED MUDS IN A STICKY SUBSTANCE



John M. Brealey

OF the visual arts, painting is the most ephemeral. People talk knowingly about Greek art, and yet not a single mural or panel painting by an ancient Greek artist has come down to us; we can only guess, on the basis of small-scale vase paintings, at the pictorial achievements of Polygnotus, Zeuxis, Apelles, Nicias, and others whose work was valued as highly by classical writers as the sculpture of Phidias and Praxiteles. Some of the most famous paintings of the Renaissance have ceased to exist, and those that survive do not look the way they did when they were painted. There is a common misunderstanding that a restorer of paintings somehow "restores" them to their original state. Time and chemistry have made that impossible, however, and the restorer, more often than is generally admitted, contributes to the process of decay.

The application of sophisticated new technologies to the restorer's bag of tricks has not altered this situation in any basic way. Microscopy, chemical analysis of pigments and varnishes, the use of radiography, infrared or ultraviolet light, and other advanced methods can provide essential information about the changes that have occurred over the years—can pinpoint original paint losses and subsequent retouchings, for example—but, because paint is an unstable substance, the process of deterioration goes on. Dark colors tend to go down in tone, so that the detail in the painting of shadows is eventually lost, while other pigments may become lighter through fading, or even change completely in color. Some pigments—white, ultramarine—change less than others, which means that if a painting's surface is cleaned uniformly and without discrimination they take on an unintended intensity and can jump out of context. In the past, painters often added varnish or wax to their oils (some still do); when the surface coating of their paintings discolors and has to be removed, the solvents do not discriminate between the original paint and the oxidized varnish, and the paint surface is "skinned." The canvas or wood-panel support reacts to changes in temperature and humidity by expanding or contracting, which causes the paint layer to fracture and divide into a Milky Way of tiny islands that may eventually flake off. We can slow these changes to some extent through the proper use of environmental controls, but we cannot halt them, or put right the inevitable visual distortions that have altered the painter's conception. And, unfortunately, as we have seen so often in this century, advanced technology has a habit of producing nasty side effects. The seemingly miraculous ability of modern restorers to transfer a painting from one backing to another—from wood to canvas, for instance, or from old canvas to new—has led to countless relinings (as the procedure is called) that were not only unnecessary but disastrous. With every relining, some form of pressure is required to make the paint layer adhere to its new support, and in the past this usually resulted in a flattening of the painting's surface. Since the surface texture is such an important aspect of most paintings—the brushstrokes catching and throwing back the light—even a slight flattening can result in a betrayal of the artist's intention.

Another, more serious side effect has been the tendency of many modern restorers to think of themselves as technicians, and nothing more. In some ways, this must have presented itself as a vast improvement over past attitudes toward the profession. Until the eighteenth century, there were no professional restorers; whatever repair work was done on pictures was done by later artists, who usually just repainted them. Changing tastes, a renewed interest in antiquity, and the rise of modern science have all contributed to the restorer's emergence as an independent expert, but the profession has always been a trifle suspect. Delacroix considered all restorations abominable. He wrote in his journal (July 29, 1854), "You finish not with a restored picture but with a different picture painted by the miserable dauber who has taken the place of the real artist." Art historians occasionally feel the same way. Some of them look upon the restorer as a shady character, a would-be alchemist whose jealously guarded trade secrets too often conceal a cavalier attitude toward works of art. Surely it was better, then, for the restorer to approach the problem objectively, as a technician trained in the latest scientific methods? The "objective" approach, however, turned out to be more dangerous than the alchemical one, because its focus was too narrow. This, at any rate, is the opinion of John M. Brealey, the chairman of the Department of Paintings Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum. "The real culprit for turning paintings into artifacts is the conservator," he has said. "There are so many examples in our time of insolence, arrogance, and contempt for the artist that it is difficult to know how to start enumerating them." A sick painting cannot be dealt with simply in terms of its visible and invisible ills, according to Brealey. Accumulated dirt and discolored varnish can be removed; loosened or flaking paint can be glued down and a new varnish applied. But what is essential to the work of art—its tonal harmony, its internal structure, its convincingness as an illusion—can perish absolutely in the process. The operation is a success, but the patient dies.

During the last decade, Brealey has been the prime mover in a campaign to transform the theory and practice of the conservation of paintings in this country. A sixty-three-year-old Englishman who was considered the finest private restorer of paintings in England, he gave up his extensive and well-paid practice in 1975, because the Metropolitan offered him a chance to set up his own teaching institute within the museum and in this way to work toward raising the standards of his profession. Those standards desperately needed raising, according to Brealey. "More damage has been done to paintings in this century than at any other period in history," he told me at our first meeting, "simply because so many people are unwilling to make judgments about complicated questions. They learn all sorts of technical expertise in their training, and then they approach paintings as problems to be solved—how to glue down that flake or clean that spot—when what they really need to do is get into the mind of the artist."

Brealey is by no means anti-technology, as some of his detractors have charged. The Sherman Fairchild Conservation Center, which he designed for the Met, has the most advanced equipment available to the profession, and his staff includes a research chemist and two associates. It is also the first museum conservation department to have an art historian attached to it full time. The point that Brealey stresses over and over, in private and in public, is that the conservation of paintings must be based on a continuing, collaborative effort to know everything that can possibly be known about the specific work of art and the artist who made it. You can never know enough, he says, but you had damn well better try. It is absolutely essential, for example, when dealing with a work of art, to have studied other works by the same artist—especially those that are in a relatively good state of preservation. It is important to know the work of that artist's contemporaries, rivals, and imitators; to know everything there is to be known about the painting methods and materials that were in use during the artist's lifetime; to be familiar with the aesthetic, religious, political, and social ideas that were current then. Brealey insists that the various skills traditionally associated with conservator-restorers—connoisseurship, touch, intuition—are not nearly enough to bring to this business, which is really the life and death of paintings. Since no one person can master all the requirements, Brealey's goal is a collaborative effort, with constant discussion among all the people involved.

This is what goes on in Brealey's department, at any rate, and it is going on now in a number of other museums as well. The Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; the Kimbell Art Museum, in Fort Worth; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the J. Paul Getty Museum; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art have taken on Brealey-trained conservators within the last few years, and those people are busy training others. More and more museum directors and curators seem to espouse the "humanistic" approach to the conservation of paintings, and to echo Brealey's views on the need for interdisciplinary efforts. Some of the methods that Brealey has inveighed against most strenuously—such as the wax relining of pictures—have fallen so precipitously out of fashion that they are on the verge of disappearing entirely. All this should make Brealey ecstatic, but it does not. "In a lot of places, the talk about collaboration is just lip service," he told me. "And I'm afraid what we're doing here won't last. I won't live long enough to get it established." His close friend Edmund Pillsbury, the director of the Kimbell, dismisses this sort of talk with a wave of the hand. "The Met has been a marvellous pulpit for John," he said to me. "There's still a lot of conservation going on in this country that John's not happy about, but the tide has really turned." Brealey's pessimism may simply reflect his own long and passionate involvement with a losing cause. Time wins in the end, even when it is not helped along by the restorer, the collector, the dealer, the framer, the shipper, and all the others who contribute to the ruin of paintings. "I'm continually astonished that anything has come down to us at all," Brealey says, shaking his head. "Just amazed."

NOBODY could look less like an alchemist than John Brealey. He is on the stout side, with a full head of white hair and a large, trenchant, unmistakably English face, in which diffidence seems to contend on unequal terms with merriment. The eyes are peculiar—narrow, and a trifle slanted under eyebrows that are dead

"Miss, could I have some, ah, just bread?"

straight. When I first had lunch with him, last winter, at a restaurant near the museum, he had just come back from a two-week visit to Spain, where he had been invited to oversee the restoration of El Greco's great painting "El Expolio," in the Cathedral of Toledo. Brealey is a national hero in Spain, because of his work in 1984 on Velázquez's "Las Meninas," in the Prado. He received the Gold Medal for Artistic Achievement from King Juan Carlos I for that effort, although, as he rather wryly put it, the medal should perhaps have been awarded for valor under fire. My initial impression that conversation with him might not flow easily was dispelled the moment he began talking about "Las Meninas."

"You must understand that 'Las Meninas' is one of those pictures that have become a totem," he said, "so that any change that occurs in it is looked upon as a disaster. I've often felt that if the French ever cleaned the 'Mona Lisa,' which needs cleaning very badly—the varnish is horribly yellow—even if you could bring back Leonardo to work on it he would be stoned to death. It has ceased to be a work of art and become a totem. 'Las Meninas' is entirely in that class. It was amazing that the Spanish would invite a foreigner to work on what was for them the greatest Spanish painting—just unheard of. Can you imagine the Italians bringing in some Scandinavian to work on the Sistine Chapel? So this was quite extraordinary, and I expected to get beaten up over it. I even made jokes to that effect before I left. But I didn't make jokes when I came back, because it is really very frightening to be on the receiving end of hatred. The Spanish are a polemical people, they thrive on dissension, and from the moment I arrived I felt as though I were under attack. At the hotel I'd been coming back to for twenty years or more, I felt a distinct coolness. There had been a great hue and cry in the press, of course, and my picture had been in the papers and on television, and people recognized me on the street and pointed me out—made me feel like some sort of criminal. The press camped outside the room I was working in at the museum, and they kept hounding me and hounding me. Once, there was a crowd of about three hundred people demanding to be let in; the authorities had to sneak me out the back door. And then, overnight, it all changed. Not exactly overnight—a period of two or three days. What happened was that a few influential people were let in to see what I was doing, and they reported back that the painting looked bloody marvellous, and quite suddenly I became some sort of hero. People started coming up to kiss me in the street, which for me, being English, was even worse."

"Las Meninas," the infinitely complex painting (dated 1656) in which Velázquez depicts himself, the court painter, at work on a portrait of the royal infanta, with her maids of honor (*las meninas*) in the foreground and the king and queen reflected in a mirror on the rear wall, is very large. Brealey's main problem in dealing with the picture, he said, was that all the inevitable changes that take place with time—the color changes, the changes in tonal relationships—were compounded by its size. "The essential quality of the picture is this absolutely extraordinary fall of light coming from three different directions," he explained. "But two-thirds of the picture was trailing off into darkness. The dark areas had become darker with time, and less easy to read, and, by comparison, the light areas had not changed to the same degree. So if you treated the picture as though you were scrubbing a floor—as though your task were just in some beautifully neat way to remove those oxidized and discolored layers of varnish and then revarnish the surface—it would have resulted in the decimation of the painting as an entity. This is really why I was invited over—to hold the picture together. The slightest thing you do to a painting affects the balance. And there are infinite degrees of cleaning—it's not just a question of on or off." By way of example, Brealey described to me how in cleaning Rembrandt's "The Noble Slav," at the Metropolitan, he had left a microscopically thin layer of old varnish on the subject's white turban; since the white pigment had retained much of its original intensity, while the rest of the painting had darkened with age, it was necessary to "hold back" the turban a little to keep it from looking totally out of key.

"The problem with 'Las Meninas' was to hold it together so that it would read in a convincing way," Brealey continued. "So that your eye could go for a walk into the whole picture and there would be no anomalies. So that the light areas didn't jump out of the picture at you. An example of a picture of similar size and importance that no longer reads convincingly, another totemic picture, is Rembrandt's so-called 'Night Watch.' The space in that picture doesn't make sense anymore. In the room in the Rijksmuseum where they keep 'The Night Watch,' there is a copy of it made by a minor artist whose name I always forget—one day I'll write it down. The reason it's there is that 'The Night Watch' was once cut down, and the copy

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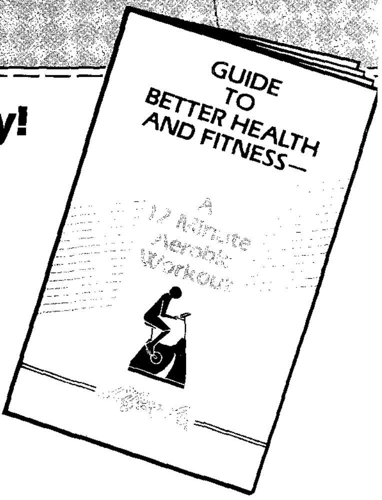

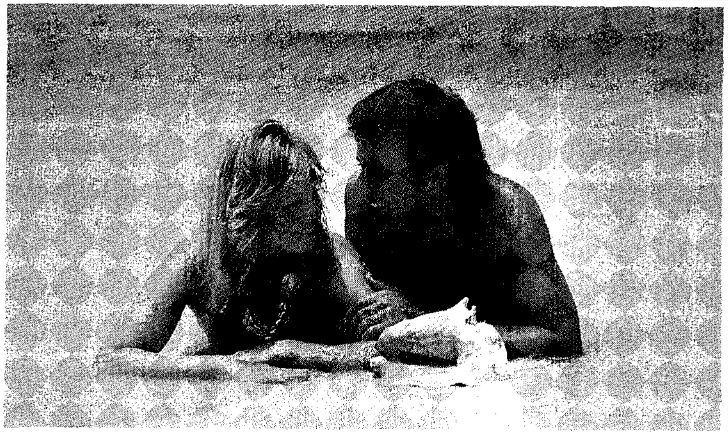

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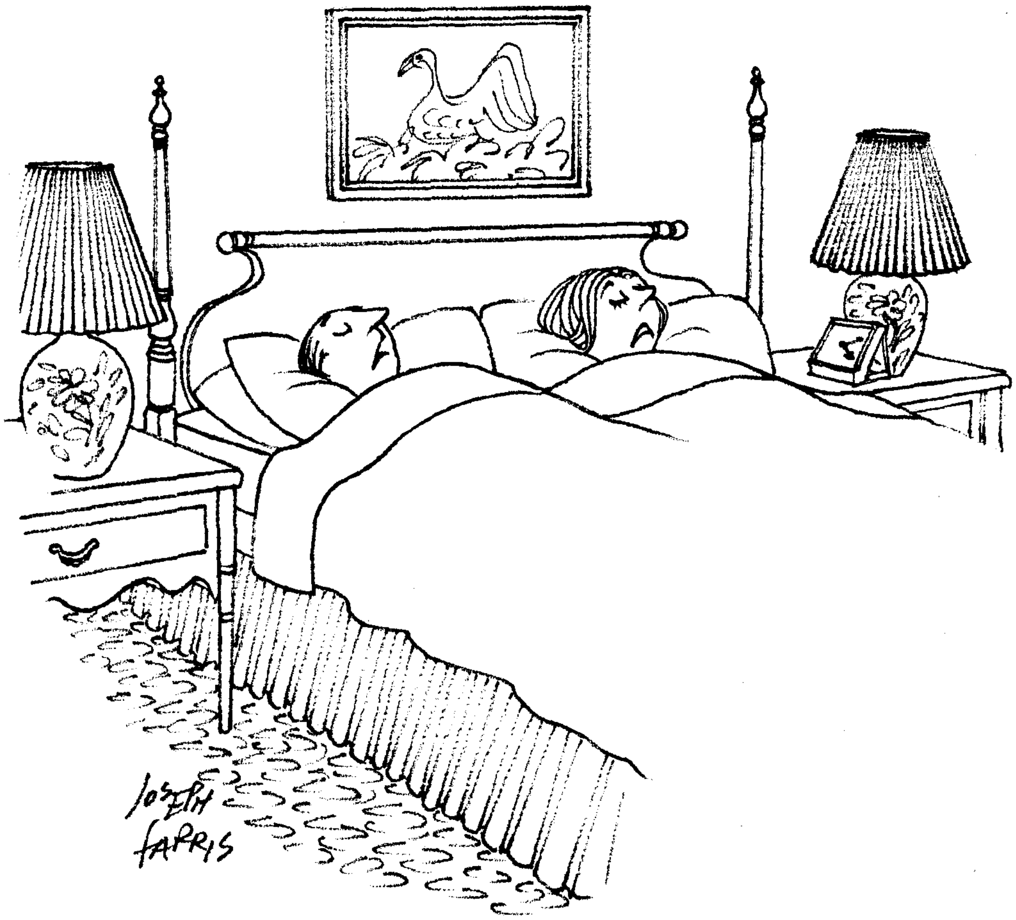
shows its original dimensions. And it's very curious to see that this minor artist, making his copy, has succeeded brilliantly in doing what Rembrandt apparently couldn't do in making the space work. The space in the Rembrandt is terribly jumbled, the figures jumping all out of context. That's the result of restoration work that was done a long time ago—probably more than a hundred years ago. Recently, they had an opportunity to go into the picture again, after some madman slashed it with a knife. This kind of thing, where you make slashes disappear, enormously impresses the layman, but it's no great problem to do. If the slash is clean, as it was in this case, there is no loss of paint, and it's just a matter of bringing the edges together again. But here they had an opportunity to go into the picture again and try to make the space read coherently, and the fact that they didn't do it is for me in the deepest sense a failure. They didn't do the right thing by the artist."

Brealey, who had scarcely touched his lunch, took two bites of sole and put down his fork again. "We're here to serve the artist," he said. "The poor bloody artist long since deceased, and the grandeur of his creation looking like a messed-up jigsaw puzzle, with all the values scrambled by the aging process and also by barbarous interference—you can never have enough qualities of intelligence to bring to that. But you just do your damnedest to identify in the most servile way with the artist. To allow your personality to be eclipsed, as though you were standing behind the artist while he painted and following his thinking. His thinking happens to be expressed in visual terms, but it's thinking. This is not only a fascinating idea—it is the beginning and the end of responsibility. Because what we are dealing with is visual truths, which are different from verbal truths. If the visual aspect of a painting changes, the meaning changes—because the look *is* the meaning. It's not the same with music or literature. If somebody plays a Schubert sonata and does it abominably, somebody else can take the same score and do it well. But visual artists don't have that luxury. In a painting, somebody's personality and intellect are expressed by colored muds. Colored muds held together by a sticky substance—that's painting. I mean, it's that banal! But a great artist can do something with those colored muds that you'll never forget, that will change your life, and our whole responsibility is to that artist. Not to the dealer, not to the owner, not to the public, but to the artist.”

Brealey had been talking more and more rapidly, the words pouring out in an articulate cascade. Now he paused, and went on, more reflectively, “Of course, they don’t teach this in the institutes of conservation. They teach what can be examined, and this is a far cry from that. There are many technical ways of attacking a technical problem, but the thing is to make people aware that it’s not just the technical solution that matters but how that solution affects the values and the meaning of the picture. And it is possible to go *totally* wrong. Just imagine, for example, a conservator in a small museum that has mainly nineteenth-century pictures, and one great painting by Giovanni Bellini. He’s done all his work on nineteenth-century pictures and he turns his hand to the Bellini. But suppose he’s never been to Venice—the horror of it! It’s ludicrous, and it’s very dangerous, and it happens all the time.

“Anyway, this was the sort of responsibility I felt toward ‘Las Meninas,’ in spite of the pressures, the reporters camped outside, and all that—the various factions stirring up public rage so that it was really a rather fearful situation. I’m thankful that I had the opportunity to work on this picture, which was obviously the high spot of my life professionally. As I look back, all the dross has fallen away. What has meaning for me now is just the joy of working on the picture.”

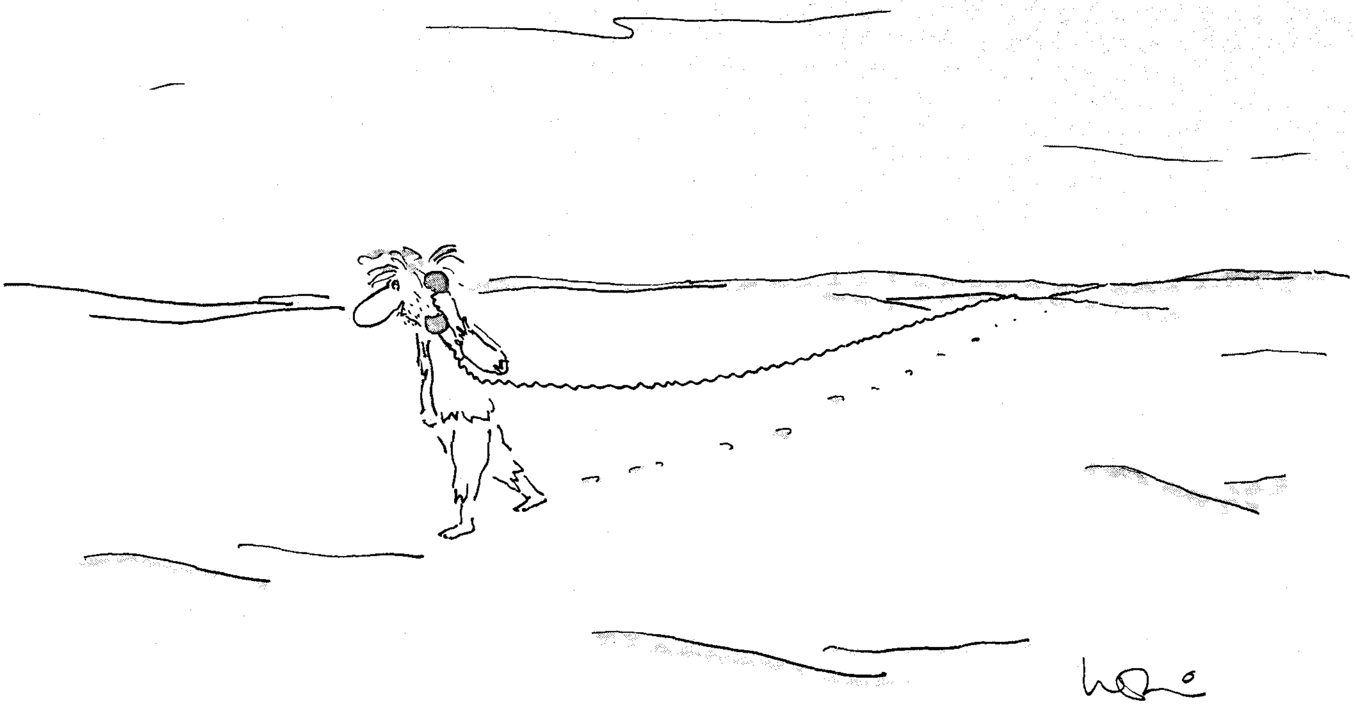


“I object!” *“Overruled!”*

JOHN BREALEY always knew he wanted to be involved in the art world somehow, but he never had the slightest interest in becoming an artist. His father, William Brealey, was a well-known portrait painter in London. Growing up in comfortable surroundings, young John was taken around to a great many artists’ studios; the ones he liked best were the sculptors’ studios, where he could muck about with clay. He went to a traditional public school (Mill Hill, in northwest London), but that did not prevent him from educating himself, at every opportunity, through reading and through talking with his father’s friends and acquaintances, about the world of art. He learned about Cubism from Gustav Kahnweiler, whose brother, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, had been Picasso’s dealer in Paris. (Gustav was an art historian, based in Cambridge.) John Brealey never went to college. When the war started, he enlisted in the Royal Air Force, and was assigned to flight control and sent eventually to the Far East. In Bombay, a physical examination disclosed the fact that he had had tuberculous peritonitis as a child—a condition that should have disqualified him from active duty. (It has never interfered with his life in any other way.) Transferred to the educational branch of the R.A.F., he somehow persuaded his superiors to let him go about India giving lectures to R.A.F. personnel on Cubism, the Bauhaus, and other matters that were of great interest to him, if not, in all cases, to his listeners.

Back in London after the war, eager to get into the art world in some capacity, he had any number of people to go to for advice. The first person he approached was James Byam Shaw, an art historian, who was then the director of Colnaghi’s, the highly respected firm of Old Master dealers. As Brealey recalls it, “Shaw said, after listening to me for some time, that I was clearly cut out to be an art restorer, and that I should go to Dr. Johannes Hell for training.” The following day, Brealey had an interview with Anthony Blunt, the director of the Courtauld Institute of Art, who said exactly the same thing, including the part about apprenticing himself to Dr. Hell. What was it that made them both so sure? “Years later, I asked them that question,” Brealey said, “and neither one remembered ever having said it. But I suppose there were obvious reasons. I wasn’t interested in being a painter, in projecting my own personality. Tuning in—that’s what interested me. The thrill of being associated with great minds. And I guess this somewhat organic approach was immediately perceived, and it ruled me out straightaway as a scholar, who is supposed to be up in the heavens seeing things from a cool vantage point.”

Dr. Johannes Hell was a scholar *and* a restorer. He had started out as a painter, in Germany, and had then become an art historian, a professor at the University of Berlin, and a leading



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authority on Rembrandt. His work on Rembrandt brought him to the troubling realization that in many cases we were looking at Rembrandt not through Rembrandt's eyes but through the eyes of a restorer—that certain paintings echoed the restorer's mind more than the artist's. This led to Dr. Hell's becoming a restorer himself. Forced to flee Nazi Germany before the war, he reëstablished his practice in London, and soon found himself the leading opponent of the picture-cleaning policies of the National Gallery. The National Gallery's consultant on restoration then was Helmut Ruhemann, also a German, a man whose belief in radical cleaning methods was responsible for what many museum people today consider the catastrophic overcleaning of a number of great Titians and other world-class paintings. Dr. Hell deplored Ruhemann's approach. His philosophy was essentially the one that Brealey adheres to today—to do no more than is absolutely necessary to hold the picture together, in the light of everything you know about the artist's intentions. Dr. Hell had never trained student restorers, and he was reluctant to take on Brealey. Anthony Blunt and others prevailed on him, however, and Brealey was taken on. He stayed for three years, "working on very, very great pictures all the time," as he recalls. "I don't ever remember a picture of secondary quality in the studio the whole time I was there. Dr. Hell was a wonderful teacher but an extremely difficult man, very temperamental, not easy at all. He had no interest in contemporary art when I started with him, and he ended up lov*ing* it. I talked him into that."

Brealey also spent a year at the Courtauld Institute of Art, learning the scientific side of picture conservation, and throughout his apprenticeship he read art history in the Courtauld library. For all this he received no degree or certificate whatsoever. "I was the first person in England to have the kind of training I had," he told me. At the end of it, he heard that Helmut Ruhemann was looking for an assistant at the National Gallery. "He would have taken me immediately, because it would have been such a kick in the eye to my teacher if I'd gone over to the opposition. But, of course, I couldn't do that. There wasn't another museum in England then that would hire a full-time restorer, so I was obliged to become a free lance. It was far from what I wanted. I would have loved to work at the National Gallery."

Brealey set up shop as a private restorer in 1951. He was determined from the start to work only on good pictures—"real works of art, not just wall furniture"—and business was slow for a while. Although he knew a lot of influential people, collectors were naturally hesitant to entrust important pictures to someone who was just starting out. One way of demonstrating his ability was to take on jobs that other restorers wouldn't touch—pictures that were in very poor condition. Anthony Blunt, who had become Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, was instrumental in arranging for Brealey to restore a number of paintings in the Royal Collection. (Brealey never suspected that Blunt might have a life outside the art world. When it was revealed, in 1979, that Blunt had been part of the Soviet spy ring that included Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, Brealey, like everyone else, was astounded.) Within a few years, Brealey had established his reputation and found himself working increasingly long hours. He also worked most weekends and holidays, which was hard on his family—a wife and two young sons—but important from the point of view of experience. He acquired pockets of specialized knowledge about certain artists: Claude Lorrain; Rubens and Van Dyck (a prodigious number of paintings by both artists passed through his studio); Adam Elsheimer (1578-1610), the German best known for his exquisite small-scale landscapes painted on copper; and, of course, Turner. English collections always have Turners in advanced states of disintegration. "They're terrifying to work on, because Turner was technically so corrupt," Brealey told me. "You're never on sure ground, from the earliest pictures to the last. He used watercolor on top of oil and oil on top of watercolor, he worked soft resin into his paint, he used pigments that he knew would fade or darken. It wasn't that he didn't know any better—he did. But the important thing to him was the moment, to capture those evanescent moments and atmospheric effects, and he was willing to try all sorts of unsound experiments and techniques to that end. He was also one of the few painters who in their own lifetimes have employed restorers to save some of their pictures."

In the early nineteen-sixties, Brealey came under increasing pressure to do something about the nine huge canvases by Mantegna in the Queen's Collection at Hampton Court—the series known as "The Triumphs of Caesar." These paintings, which Mantegna considered his most important works, had suffered incredible indignities throughout their history. Commissioned by the Gonzaga family of Mantua in 1484, they had apparently been used soon afterward as backgrounds for outdoor theatricals. (Each painting is nine feet square.) Charles I bought them in 1627 and had them shipped to London, where by 1700 they were described in the royal inventory as being "in a ruinous state." Brealey was well aware of the damage they had incurred since then, and he proceeded to describe it to me.

"Soon after that 1700 inventory, a French artist named Louis Laguerre, rather a bad artist, a court painter to William of Orange, was commissioned to restore them," he said. "He simply overpainted them completely. The original medium was aqueous, and they were very thinly painted, on fine linen, with practically no ground. It was really like gouache—poster color—and the effects must have been exceptionally brilliant and fresh. Laguerre overpainted them in oils, which was like a death blow. The oil draining into that aqueous color tarnished and sullied it beyond recognition. But the authorities announced that Laguerre's work was a success, because he had 'successfully mimicked the master'—he had followed the composition.

"In the nineteenth century, they set up a body to see how the pictures could be treated, the overpainting taken off, because they were the most important High Renaissance paintings in England. Those people carried out some experiments and gave up. Then, in the twenties, Roger Fry, who was both a critic-historian and a painter, had a go at them, although he knew nothing at all about conservation techniques. He made the situation far worse, and he

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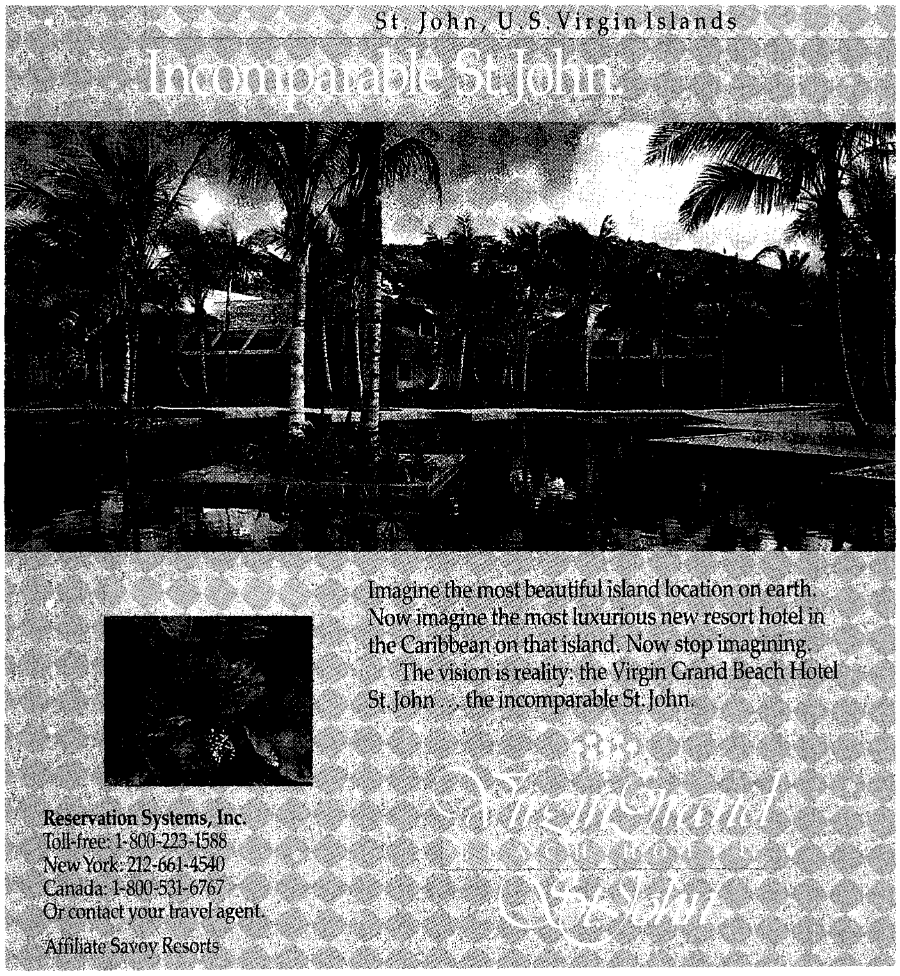

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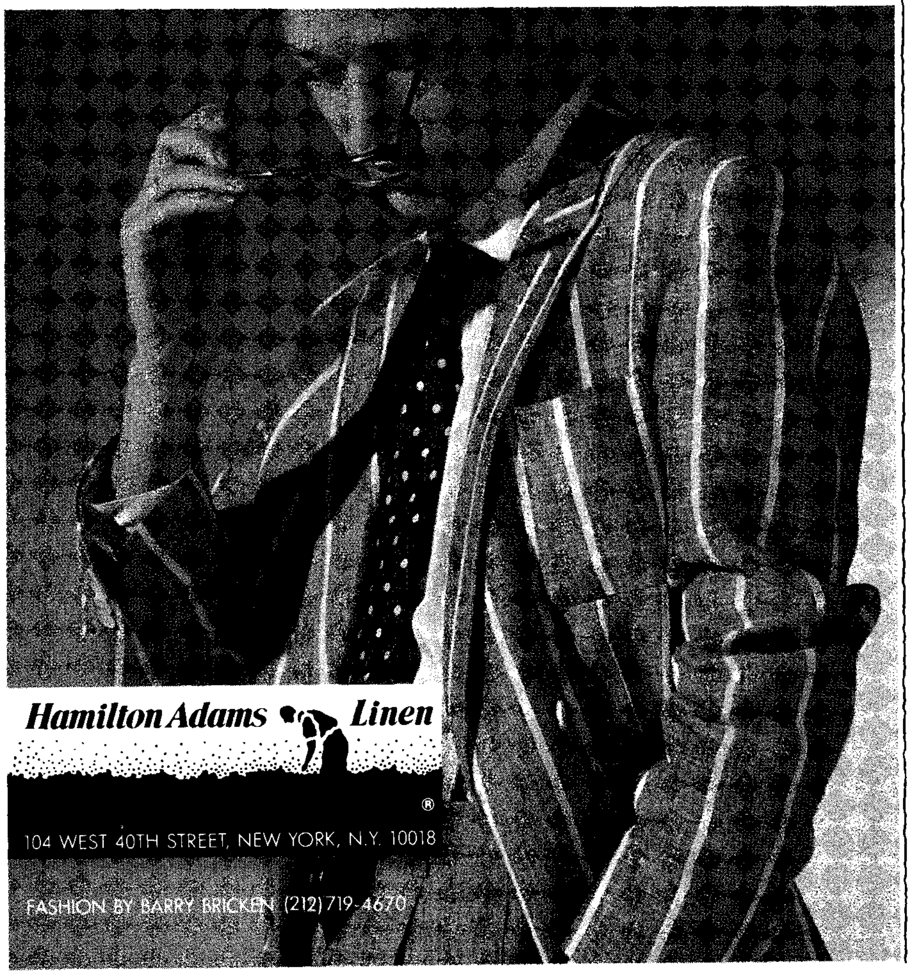

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totally overpainted one of the pictures a second time.

"A man called Kennedy-North worked on them for three years in the thirties, with even more disastrous consequences. He used wax resin as an adhesive to reline them, and he must have used over a ton of it—it was unbelievable. There were no hot tables for relining then—hot tables are supposed to heat the entire surface evenly, although they never do. He used huge tailors' irons weighing fifteen pounds or more, and his resin was not the right type. The result was that when the iron went on the back of the new canvas it was much too hot, and the wax melted and came out like a wave all around the iron, leaving great welts, which solidified immediately as they cooled. The consequences were quite terrible."

As it happened, Brealey had done a lot of work on Italian pictures by the time he encountered the Mantegnas, and he had also restored a number of paintings that had been nearly ruined by Kennedy-North. "I had those two areas of information," he said, "which meant that I was under great moral pressure from Anthony Blunt to work on the paintings. I said to him, 'Look, I will for the rest of my career be associated with these ruined pictures, which is not a good idea; the last person who touches them always gets the blame.' He was very amused, but over the years he went on pushing me, so that in the end I was very conscience-stricken, and around 1965 I did start to work on them."

He worked on them for nine years. Not exclusively, of course—he had to keep his studio going. Several times a week, though, he made the trip to Hampton Court and resumed the interminable labor of undoing the sins of other restorers. The working conditions were awful. "There was no heat in the winter—I wore two overcoats most of the time—and the pictures were in the seventeenth-century, Wren part of the palace, in a room that faced a courtyard, and the light wasn't good. There was no way I could bring those pictures to my studio; there was the insurance problem, to begin with. Each of them weighed so much from all that wax that it took several men just to lift it. For a period, they tried to make it easier for me by moving some of them to the Tate Gallery, but the space I was given at the Tate was drafty and dirty, and it simply had to be abandoned. The work was utterly frustrating. All that going down very slowly, layer by layer, and then finding that the original paint had become so completely impregnated by the wax, all the way through, that it was soft as butter. The paint was completely missing from the crown of the weave; it had been sliced off by abrasion from the ironing. The whole thing was a nightmare. People praised the end result, but if I had it to do over again, and if I knew the real state of those pictures, I would not think it worthwhile. If something is gone to such a degree, then what are you doing? A form of archeology, that's all. You're not bringing back the artist. You may bring back the composition so that it's more readable, you may get to a few very beautiful areas that by some miracle have survived, but as a whole—and this was a series of paintings that showed a procession—as a whole it doesn't work, and the artist's intention has long since perished, so what's the point?"

When the Hampton Court Mantegnas were returned to public view, in 1975, Brealey's salvage job was hailed as a miracle of restoration. Anthony Blunt referred to it as "one of the most remarkable pieces of restoration achieved in the present century." Brealey didn't really need the acclaim. By this time, he had become conservator to virtually every great public collection in England: the Royal Collection, the National Trust, the Fitzwilliam Museum, at Cambridge, the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, the Wallace Collection, the Courtauld Institute Galleries. Five branches of the Rothschild family sent their pictures to him for cleaning and restoration, and his private American clients included Paul Mellon, Charles Wrightsman, and J. Paul Getty. He travelled a great deal, visiting the houses of clients throughout Europe, and not infrequently looking at pictures that they were thinking of buying; his eye for quality was known to be as keen as his insight into a picture's state of preservation. Most of the important figures in the international museum world made a point of visiting his studio when they came to London. They were always sure to see great pictures there, and Brealey was always eager to draw upon their knowledge.

Brealey himself does not collect paintings. He is building up a modest collection of Old Master drawings, but it would be absurd for him to buy pictures, he said—he couldn't afford anything comparable in quality to the paintings he works on every day. His fees as a private restorer were surprisingly reasonable—less than a thousand pounds, ordinarily, to restore a picture that might easily bring millions at auction. He had a reputation for being absolutely straight in all his dealings and also for speaking his mind in a way that made some people very nervous. "If he didn't think a painting was first class, he could say things about it that made me blanch," according to Eugene V. Thaw, one of the most successful private art dealers. (Dealers have to stay friends with everybody.) Although Brealey did not usually work for the trade, if a dealer brought him a painting of exceptional quality he would sometimes agree to restore it, partly as a means of making sure it did not get into the wrong hands. Thaw, who formed part of a dealers' consortium called Artemis, once asked him to look at a Rembrandt that Artemis had just acquired—a portrait of a bearded man.

"It had this characteristic problem," Brealey said when I asked him about the picture. "The painting was in a beautiful state, there were no major paint losses, but it just didn't work anymore, didn't read properly. The face and the hands had been overcleaned in a very awful way, but when I examined it I could see that in the background there were still traces of the original varnish, which was very beautiful. And so I managed to transfer those remnants of varnish evenly over the whole picture, and it made all the difference. Suddenly, the picture was readable again. I just did all that was necessary to bring back the conviction of the picture as a portrait and as a Rembrandt."

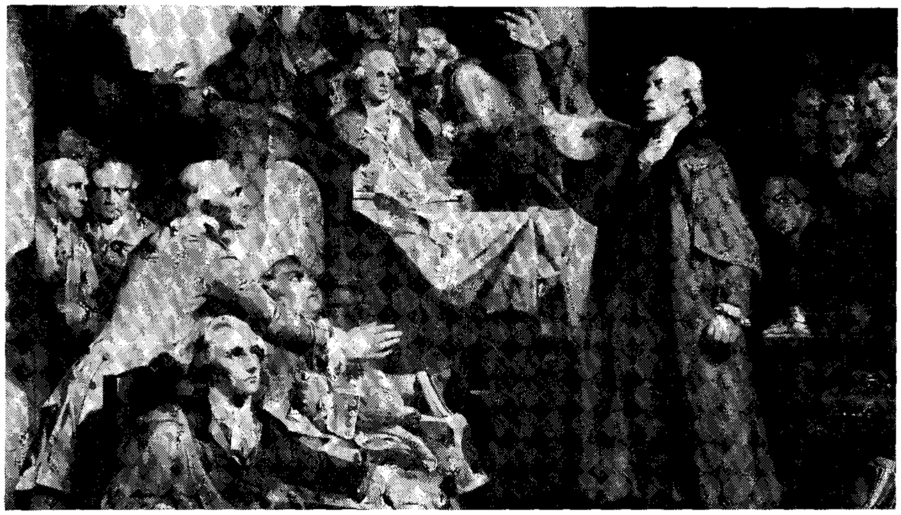
"How did you do that?" I asked.

"Oh," he said. "You want me to give away state secrets, do you?"

I told him what Thaw had said—that Brealey had cleaned off the old varnish very carefully, saved all the cotton swabs he'd used in doing so, and then distilled the old varnish from the swabs.

"That's exactly right," Brealey conceded. "The rest of the picture had a modern varnish, which was easy to take off. The problem then was simply to remove those remnants of old varnish which were distributed here and there in the dark background. I squeezed out each swab into a glass jar, and reduced it by evaporation, and sprayed it evenly over the whole surface. And then I discovered that it was possible to put thin-brushed varnish over the picture without disturbing the old varnish. It took practically no time at all. They had the picture back in three days."

GISELA HELMKAMPF, trained as a conservator of paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts at Stuttgart, was for seven years the chief conservator of the Area Museum Service for South East England. She wanted to work on great paintings—better paintings than the ones she had to deal with in the area museums—and so she came to work for John Brealey at his London studio. "To put it mildly," she told me, "I started over again from scratch. It was a total change in approach for me. Before, a painting was simply an object. Whether it was a Titian or a portrait of someone's grandmother didn't matter too much. But with John I realized that this was not so." Working for Brealey was an emotional strain as well as a revelation. "John is a moody man, and he does not hesitate to let you know if you've made a mistake." She eventually won his confidence; one of Brealey's stipulations in accepting the job at the Metropolitan was that Gisela Helmkampf come along as his principal assistant. When I asked her what it was that made Brealey so good at his job—what special combination of skills—she smiled and tapped a forefinger against her forehead. "It is not in the hands," she said. "He is not a practical man. It is all in the head. It is his way of seeing into pictures, and sensing what the artist is at-



They applauded the part about liberty and death, but they gave the guy who chose the meeting room a standing ovation.

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tempting to do. This is the key thing."

The Metropolitan Museum first approached Brealey in a somewhat roundabout way, through a former member of its staff who was a close friend of his. The Met's conservator of paintings, Hubert von Sonnenburg, had given notice that he was leaving. After fourteen years at the museum, he wanted to go back to Germany. Von Sonnenburg, a brilliant and greatly respected conservator, had been trained by Dr. Johannes Hell, Brealey's teacher, and when Thomas Hoving, the Met's director, asked him to recommend a successor he unhesitatingly named Brealey. The former staff member sent to feel Brealey out on the subject got nowhere—he and Brealey both agreed that it was not a serious offer. But about six months later John Walsh, the vice-chairman of the Met's Department of European Paintings, went to London and talked with Brealey. "Walsh had done his homework," Brealey said. "He knew how strongly I felt about teaching, and the need to try to raise standards, and so forth." Walsh said that the Met would be willing to set up a teaching institute within the museum, where Brealey and his staff could train others, and Brealey was immediately interested.

Two of Brealey's important private clients were very much in favor of bringing him to New York. Charles Wrightsman, the most notable collector on the Met's board of trustees, and Paul Mellon, the president of the board of the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., both thought the world of Brealey. Mellon let it be known that he would back him in whatever he wanted to do, and Wrightsman brought his sizable influence to bear on the Metropolitan's trustees. The chairman of the Department of European Paintings at the Met then was Anthony Clark, a great scholar, and a man known for periodic bouts of ferocious ill temper. Clark was very keen for Brealey to come over and form part of what he spoke of as a three-man team, with Walsh. It all sounded better and better to Brealey. He agreed to come, and began closing down his London studio—a process that took about a year, because of the number of pictures still to be worked on.

In June of 1975, the three-man-team idea went down the drain. The Metropolitan at the time was a very troubled institution. Hoving's controversial deaccessioning of paintings and other works from the collection in previous years had brought censure on the museum from several quarters. Staff morale was low, and there had been a number of resignations. Brealey was just finishing up the final work in his studio and packing to leave when Clark flew to London with bad news: both Walsh and Clark had decided that their authority was being undermined, and they had no choice but to resign. This put Brealey in an exceedingly awkward position. He had more or less burned his bridges in London—turned his clients over to two other restorers. Late as it was, though, he decided to change his plans. "The atmosphere at the Met must be so terrible," he reasoned. "I'd been warned by somebody on the staff that I'd be promised everything there but that I should make sure to get it in writing, and to have a lawyer standing behind me with a machine gun."

When Hoving heard that Brealey was having serious doubts about the job, he immediately flew to London. Brealey took him to lunch at an Italian restaurant. "I was extremely cool to him, and he was extremely nervous," he recalls. "I don't know if you've ever seen Tom when he's nervous, but he's all elbows, and his elbows are very sharp. To my amazement, he was thrashing his arms about at the table, and nine times out of ten—the tables in the restaurant were not all that big—his elbows would knock my arm, which made him all the more nervous."

In spite of the buffeting, Hoving got his point across. He assured Brealey that whoever was appointed to be the new chairman of the Department of European Paintings would be entirely sympathetic to what Brealey wanted. "Tom can be very persuasive," Brealey said. "And so I gave way. Now, of course, I'm glad I did, although for a time it looked very uncertain."

As it turned out, the Met did not appoint a new chairman of the Department of European Paintings for more than a year. During that period, Brealey, whose appointment as chief conservator took effect in the summer of 1975, was obliged to make a lot of decisions that would normally have been made by the department head, and he felt decidedly uneasy about doing so. When Hoving finally announced that John Pope-Hennessy had agreed to become chairman of the department, Brealey's level of uneasiness soared. Pope-Hennessy was one of the

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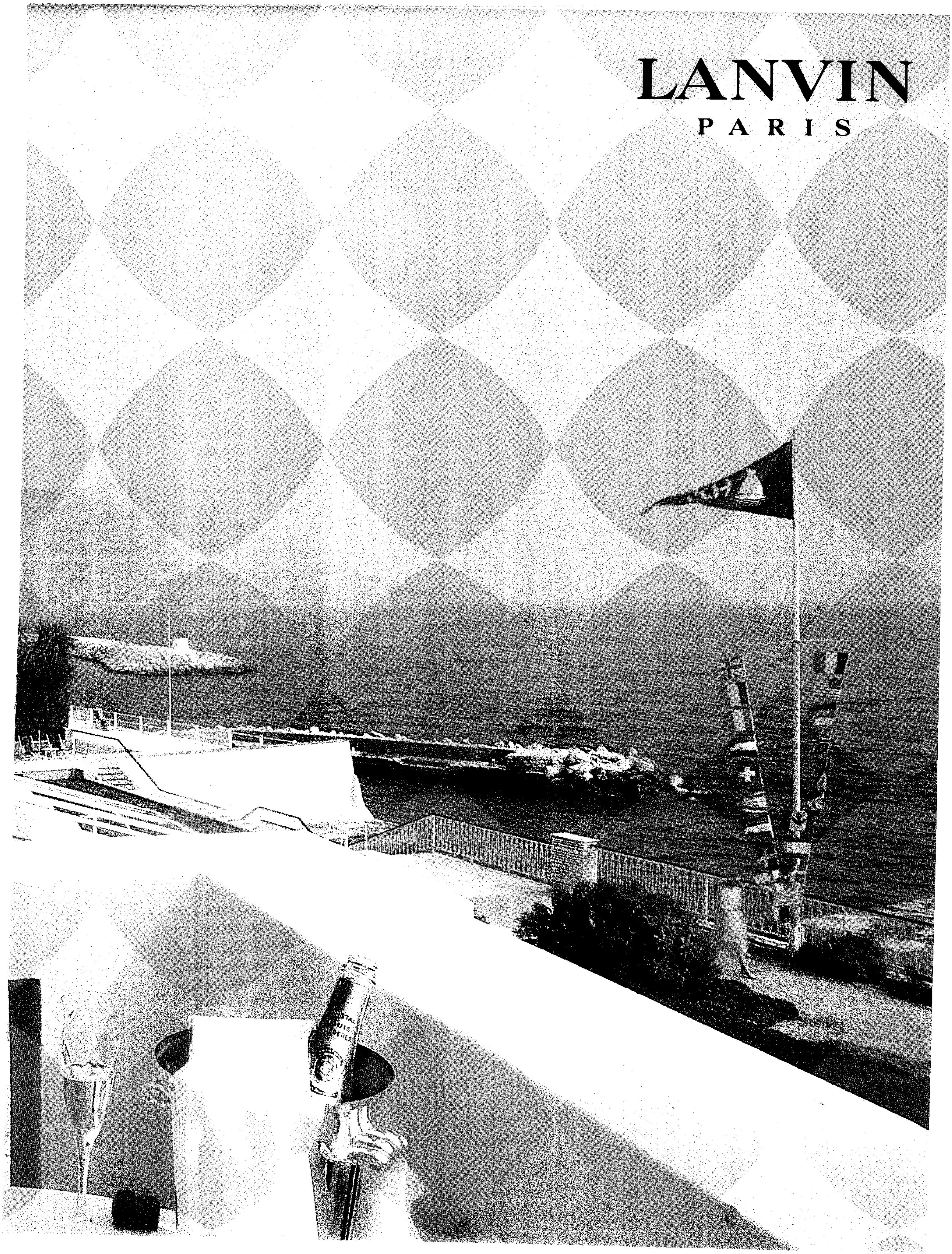

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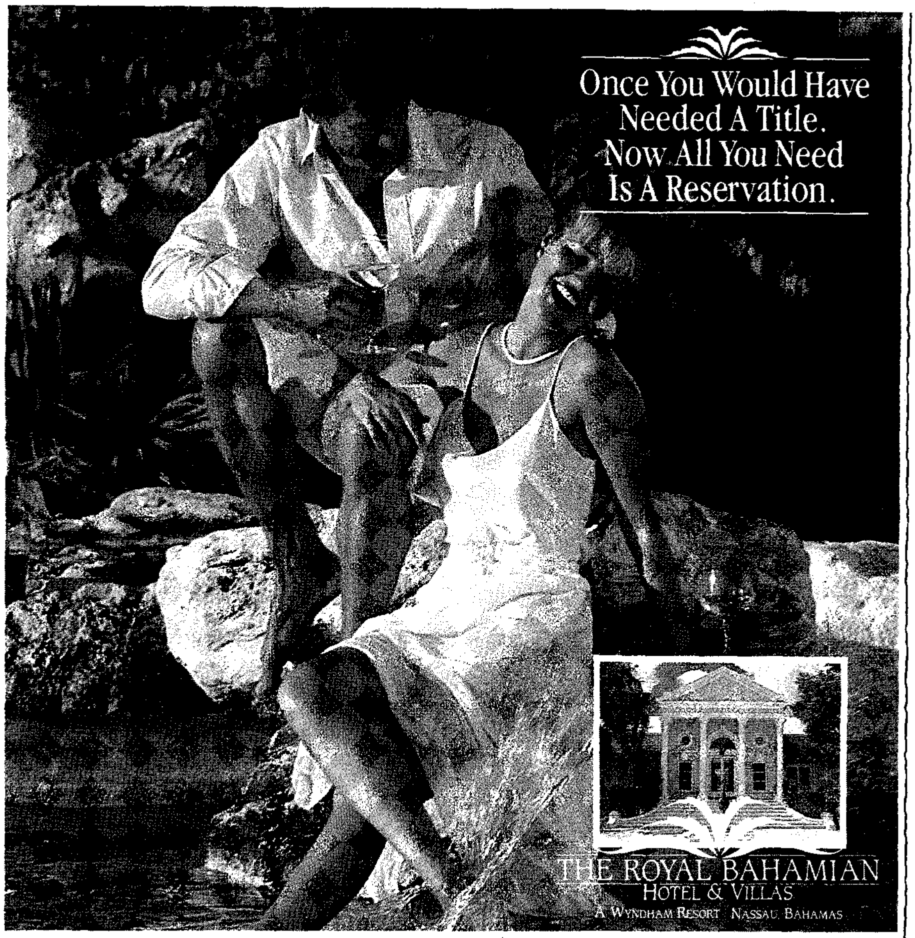
most famous art scholars in England. He had been the director of two museums in London—the Victoria and Albert and the British Museum—and Brealey knew from experience that he could be difficult to work with. Brealey discussed his misgivings with Hoving. He was planning to visit London, and he volunteered to discuss the matter with Pope-Hennessy in person—a suggestion to which Hoving gave his enthusiastic assent.

"I went straight from the airport to his office," Brealey told me. "Pope-Hennessy was sitting behind this marvellous desk. He motioned me to a chair that seemed miles away, and he started talking immediately. He went on talking, buttering me up, going on and on about how I was the greatest restorer in the world and how I should never have been 'exported'—I've never forgotten that word 'exported,' it annoyed me so—and I waited and waited, not wishing to be insufferable. And then—this will show you how he is—he observed my face, and realized that I had not come because I was fearful that I was going to be sacked by him, but that I had other reasons. And he stopped short, in mid-sentence, and put a sort of choke in his voice—the man could have made a fortune on the stage—and said, 'John, you don't want me to come, do you?' And so, of course, I denied it, and started to temporize. And he got up, came over and lifted me to my feet, walked me to the door, and said, 'We're going to have a great collaboration. Goodbye!' "

In fact, the collaboration worked fine. There were a few run-ins between them, according to Brealey, and one occasion when a matter in dispute was settled by Brealey's threatening to resign. But on the whole Brealey and Pope-Hennessy, who retired from the Met last October, worked harmoniously together at the museum. "We were in the same boat," Brealey explains. "He wanted the pictures to look good on the wall when he rehung the collection, so there was mutual advantage." Pope-Hennessy's major reshaping and rehanging of the collection, which included the opening of the André Meyer Galleries of nineteenth-century art and the rearrangement of most of the older galleries, was completed in 1981. The collection had never looked better—or better cared for. Brealey and his staff had worked on virtually every painting now on view, and their efforts received as much favorable attention, in most of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the press accounts, as Pope-Hennessy's did. People in the trade were also aware that Brealey's eye and Brealey's judgment had been an important factor in many of the Met's new acquisitions. Dealers who ask Brealey's advice about the condition of an important picture are not insensitive to the possibility that if he likes the picture the Met may want to buy it. Or, if not the Met, then perhaps the Yale Center for British Art, where Brealey serves as consultant and restorer, or the abundantly endowed Kimbell Art Museum, whose director, Edmund Pillsbury, often seeks Brealey's advice on prospective acquisitions. According to Eugene Thaw, the Metropolitan is the only museum in the world where the conservator has as much influence as the chairman of the Paintings Department. "Brealey's studio there is a real powerhouse," Thaw said recently. "A lot of collectors will buy anything he tells them to." Thaw and others agree, though, that Brealey's principal interest is not in power, influence, or acquisitions. His principal interest is in the teaching program he has established.

Since he came to the Met, Brealey and his staff have focussed more and more of their energy on teaching. The job of putting the Met's permanent collection in the best possible shape is largely complete now, and a good deal of the work in the studio is on pictures from other institutions. There are four conservators besides Brealey on the staff of his department. George Bisacca works exclusively on wood-panel paintings. Lucy Belloli specializes in twentieth-century works. Dorothy Mahon deals with American art, and Gisela Helmkampf deals with everything else. All of them work closely with Maryan Wynn Ainsworth, the department's resident art historian, and all of them are involved in teaching the students and interns attached to the department, whose number nobody seems quite able to pin down. Last spring, there appeared to be eight students (doctoral students in art history) and interns, or fellows (conservators at a more advanced stage, who have been working at their trade for a few years, either here or abroad). René de la Rie, a research chemist from Amsterdam, is in charge of the chemistry lab, and has two assistants of his own. Brealey runs the place in a collegial fashion. He encourages independent thinking and constant discussion of all problems, and he teaches mainly by example or on a one-to-one ba-

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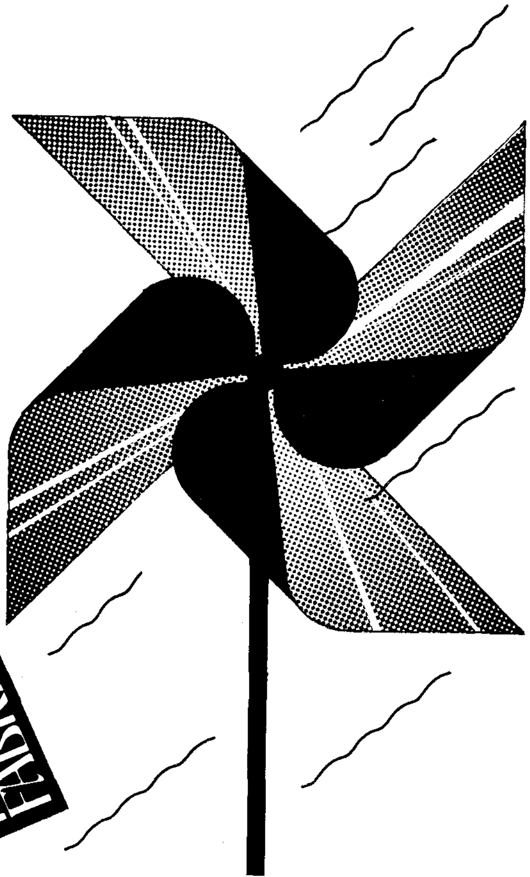

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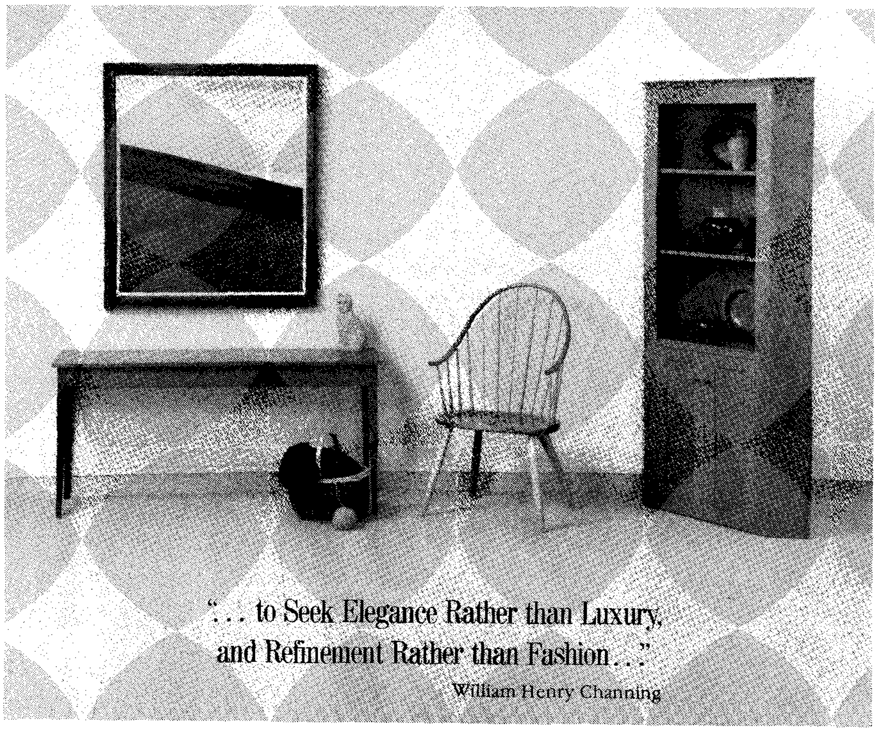

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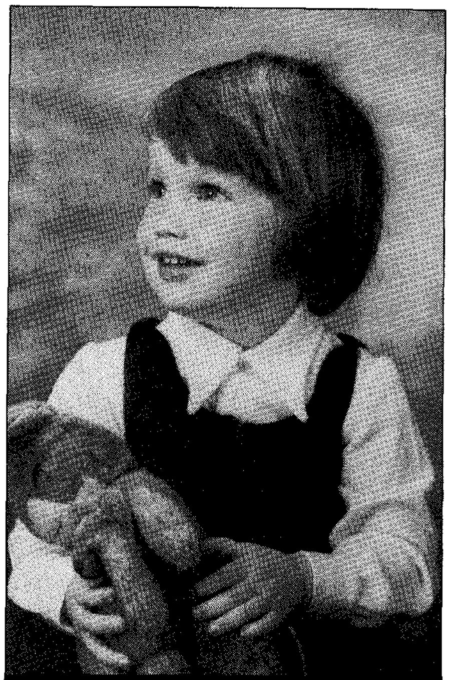
sis. "He is very acute in sensing your personal weaknesses," Lucy Belloli told me. There are usually fifty or sixty paintings in the studio, in various stages of restoration. Students and interns work on important pictures, under very close supervision. "Good pictures are easier, of course," Helmkampf says. "A great artist communicates better, more clearly, more directly, so it is easier to pick up what he wanted. It is also important for the students not to be terrified, although this *is* very scary work." The emphasis is always on doing the right thing by the artist. In the department's library, monographs on artists outnumber technical studies by about twenty to one.

The usual period of study is two years. It used to be three, but Brealey found that students tended to become too comfortable, too attached to the Metropolitan's maternal embrace, after three years, so he cut it back to two. Many more students apply than can be accepted. In the summer, Brealey sends his students and interns abroad to look at paintings on their own. He raises the money for this in a variety of ways. Some of it comes from his Visiting Committee, a group of high-level museum men and collectors who act as a sort of private board of trustees for the department. Some of it comes from art dealers and private collectors. Brealey is always being asked to look at or to work on pictures that are privately owned; if the picture is what Brealey calls a "life-changer," he will sometimes take it on, with the understanding that in lieu of a fee the owner will make a substantial contribution to his teaching program. The same understanding applies to work he does for the Frick Collection, which retains him as its consultant and restorer.

For many years, the Frick's chief conservator was William Suhr, one of the two great restorers of his generation in America. (The other is Mario Modestini, who is still active in New York.) Suhr's work occasionally was held up to students at the Fogg Museum, at Harvard, and other technically oriented conservation institutes as an example of what not to do. Suhr, for example, painted two of the horse's hooves in the Frick's famous Rembrandt "The Polish Rider;" a four-inch strip of canvas at the bottom of this painting had been damaged before it came to the Frick, and Suhr repainted the missing section so skillfully that only an expert can tell it



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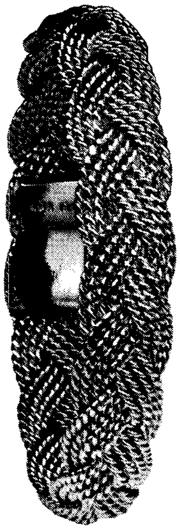

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from the original. (A committee of Dutch art historians now claims that "The Polish Rider" and many other Rembrandts are not by Rembrandt. If this is true, according to Brealey, it is astonishing that the artist who did paint "The Polish Rider"—one of the greatest pictures in America and a real "life-changer"—is not better known.) Brealey has not performed any miracles of this type. His most recent projects for the Frick—the cleaning of Ingres's "Comtesse d'Haussonville" and of the great eleven-painting series by Fragonard called "The Progress of Love"—involved very little inpainting, or retouching. But he thoroughly disagrees with purists of his profession who argue that areas where the original paint has disappeared should be left bare (as they are, for instance, in the Italian primitives in the Yale University Art Gallery). "That's the archeological fallacy," he says. "If you insist that there should be no inpainting, all you would see as you go around the world would be scars—scars rushing out at you from every picture."

The repercussions of Brealey's teaching have been felt throughout the country. When he came to New York in 1975, most American conservators were still in the grip of the "objective," technical approach, whose origins go back to the founding of the Conservation Department of the Fogg Museum, in 1928. This was the first institute of conservation in the United States, and its main goal was to establish the profession on sound scientific principles and methods. (Before this, restorers learned by the apprentice system, and kept their knowledge to themselves.) Two early students in the Fogg program, Sheldon and Caroline Keck, became the most active teachers and propagators of the new scientific faith. They taught first at their studio in Brooklyn, then at the Conservation Center of the New York University Institute of Fine Arts (established in 1960), and, from 1970 to 1981, at their own institute, in Cooperstown, New York. The Kecks and their legions of students went in for rigorous cleaning with strong solvents, and for the wax relining of paintings. Using wax instead of glue as an adhesive agent when applying the old canvas to a new canvas support was thought to be a great improvement, on several counts. It supposedly gave better protection against oxidation, moisture, and cracking. It also gave a rich, glossy lustre to the painting. Unfortunately, the process can be irrevers-

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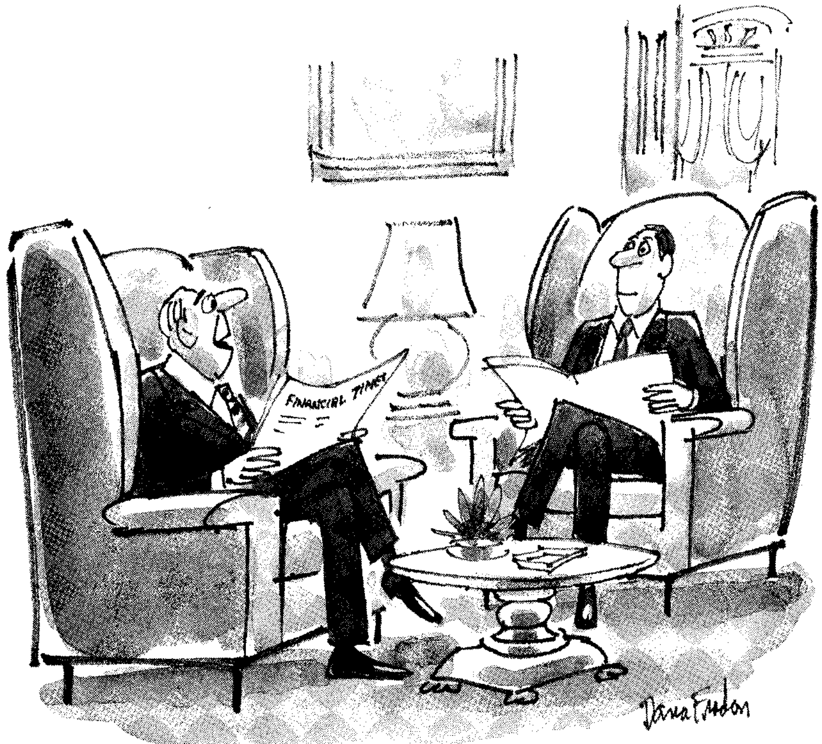
ible. One of the cardinal rules of modern restoration is that everything done must be able to be easily undone. Inpainting is done today with watercolors or acrylics, which are soluble, or else with oil colors that are sandwiched between layers of clear varnish. But when a picture is relined with a hot-wax adhesive the wax sinks into the canvas and impregnates the paint, and it can never be removed. Since different pigments have different degrees of porosity, the wax affects them in different ways, darkening some more than others. Brealey abominates the process, and has rarely used it. Now most of the institutes have come around to his point of view. The Winterthur conservation program, according to its director, Joyce Hill Stoner, was modelled originally on the N.Y.U. program and on the Kecks' program at Cooperstown. When the Winterthur program started, in 1974, about ninety-five per cent of the paintings treated were given wax relinings. "That's now down to about five per cent," Stoner told me, "and people apologize for the five per cent."

Radical cleaning methods are also on the decline. In 1978, the conservators of the National Gallery in Washington were informed that a moratorium had been placed on the cleaning of pictures in its collection. The order came straight from the president, Paul Mellon, and it was rumored that Mellon had issued it after talking with John Brealey. Brealey says he had nothing to do with the decision; although he visited the National Gallery's conservation studio shortly before the event, he says, he was not even shown the painting—Rembrandt's "The Mill"—whose cleaning supposedly triggered the moratorium. There is no reason to doubt his word. Paul Mellon, however, had known Brealey for years, had entrusted his own pictures to Brealey for cleaning, and was familiar with his views. It seems reasonable to suppose that those views had something to do with Mellon's rather dramatic order, and with the more conservative methods that have been in use ever since at the National Gallery. (The new chief conservator there, incidentally, is David Bull, one of the two men who took over many of Brealey's private clients in London when Brealey moved to New York.) The major conservation controversy of the moment involves the cleaning of Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Brealey, who was not trained in fresco restoration and has never worked on a fresco painting, is reserving judgment on this one. "I seem to be the only person who has not been up on the scaffolding there," he told me, "so I can't really have an opinion." He did suggest, though, that a fair-minded assessment of the work in the Sistine Chapel ought to require that it be seen under normal lighting conditions, rather than under the powerful floodlights installed for the cleaning process. Michelangelo undoubtedly took the rather dim light in the chapel into consideration when he painted it, as well as the distance between the ceiling and the viewer, and keyed his colors accordingly; when the floodlights are removed, the cleaned frescoes may not look as startlingly high-keyed as they do to some observers at present.

Brealey's articulate proselytizing for his own views has not endeared him to American conservators who still take the position that they are trained technicians and nothing more. They criticize him for being "too personal" in his approach—a charge that bears examination. By what right does he place himself in the mind of the artist, they ask. How can anybody do that with assurance, three hundred or five hundred years after the fact? When he adjusts and manipulates the tonal values and color harmonies of a painting, how can he be so sure he's doing what the artist intended? Brealey loves questions like those. "Say you were ill and in the hospital," he says. "Wouldn't you prefer that I approach you knowing all I can about your history, about your family and such? Of *course* it's personal. You can't possibly know enough, but you try to learn as much as you can, and then you just have to use your informed judgment. A lot of people in this field say, 'Oh, no, that's not my function, I leave that to the curators.' But that's nonsense. They're just afraid to make personal judgments." What really irritates him is the word "cosmetics," which some of his critics use to describe his efforts to preserve the tonal balance. "The way the picture *looks is* the picture," he told a reporter in 1978. "The physical body is inseparable from the meaning. To talk of 'cosmetics' is to totally misunderstand the terrifying seriousness of this controversy."

ONE thing Brealey regretted in his work as a private restorer was that he was not able to spend more



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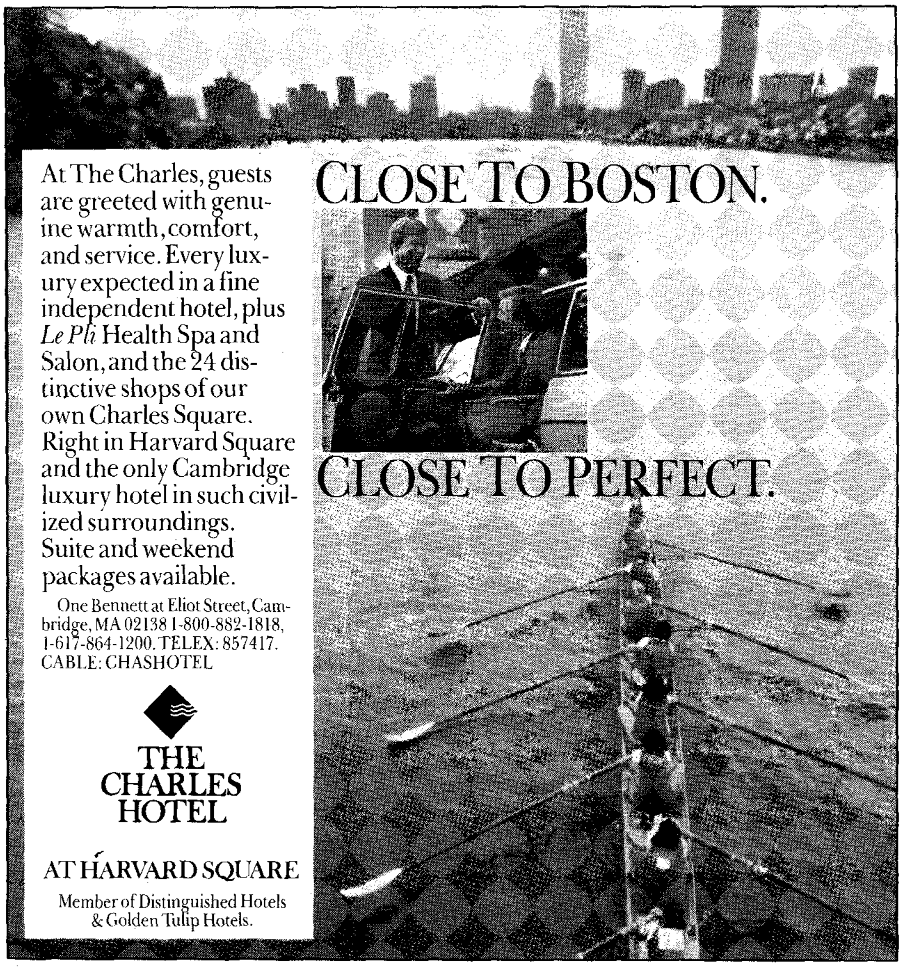

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time with modern pictures. He made his reputation restoring Old Masters, and, as a result, people stopped sending him modern works. At the Met, he takes a great interest in modern and contemporary pictures, and in the problems of preserving them. Some of these problems are insoluble; a great many contemporary pictures, in fact, are already at death's door.

"You might say that the trouble starts with Leonardo, and all those experiments he made, departing entirely from tradition," Brealey said to me one day last July. We were sitting in the principal workroom of his department, on the top floor of the Metropolitan—a long, high-ceilinged studio lined along one wall with windows that extend into the ceiling to become skylights. The light fell evenly on a dozen or more large easels, each holding a painting in some stage of cleaning or restoration: the Metropolitan's great Gauguin "Two Tahitian Women;" a Renaissance Madonna whose attribution was being restudied ("It wants to be a Bellini," according to Gisela Helmkampf); a landscape by Hubert Robert; a "Holy Family" that had recently been sold at auction, in London, for thirty-seven thousand pounds, to a dealer named Piero Corsini, who recognized it as a full-fledged Titian (the auction catalogue had listed it only as "attributed to" Titian), and who then sold it for a lot more than thirty-seven thousand pounds to the Kimbell Art Museum. Only two students were working at the easels; the others had embarked on their summer travels.

"There have always been painters who were frustrated by the limitations of their materials," Brealey said. "Even in the Renaissance, there were so few colors to work with. Only one strong green, which had a copper base that caused it to turn brown or black with time. Another green they got from malachite; it was very beautiful, but not strong enough. Often they just mixed blue and yellow, but that yields a rather poor green, like a child's color. There were these Byzantine limitations, and so they experimented—used pigments that were not permanent, tried new mediums. But, to put your finger on the real culprit—where the rot *really* starts—it starts with Sir Joshua Reynolds. There you have the beginning of the breakup of the whole workshop tradition. He knew perfectly well how to paint in a sound way technically. He wouldn't allow his students to muck around, but

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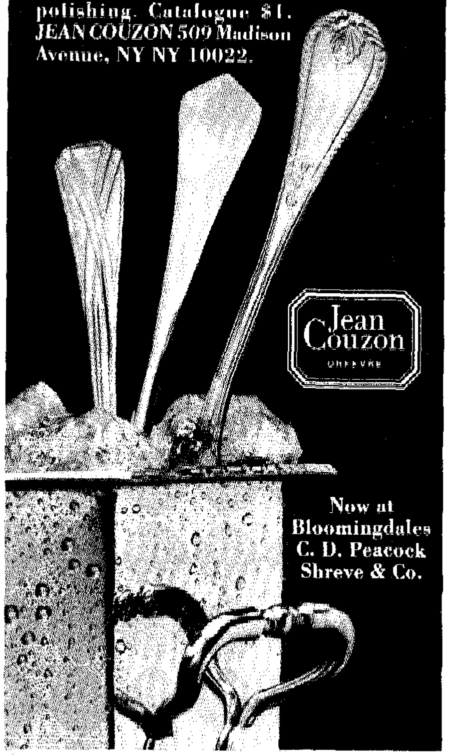

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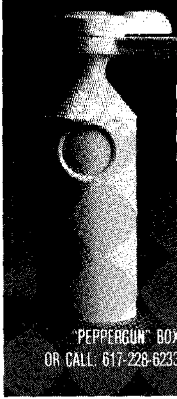

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he didn't know any better—he did. But the important thing to him was the moment, to capture those evanescent moments and atmospheric effects, and he was willing to try all sorts of unsound experiments and techniques to that end. He was also one of the few painters who in their own lifetimes have employed restorers to save some of their pictures."

In the early nineteen-sixties, Brealey came under increasing pressure to do something about the nine huge canvases by Mantegna in the Queen's Collection at Hampton Court—the series known as "The Triumphs of Caesar." These paintings, which Mantegna considered his most important works, had suffered incredible indignities throughout their history. Commissioned by the Gonzaga family of Mantua in 1484, they had apparently been used soon afterward as backgrounds for outdoor theatricals. (Each painting is nine feet square.) Charles I bought them in 1627 and had them shipped to London, where by 1700 they were described in the royal inventory as being "in a ruinous state." Brealey was well aware of the damage they had incurred since then, and he proceeded to describe it to me.

"Soon after that 1700 inventory, a French artist named Louis Laguerre, rather a bad artist, a court painter to William of Orange, was commissioned to restore them," he said. "He simply overpainted them completely. The original medium was aqueous, and they were very thinly painted, on fine linen, with practically no ground. It was really like gouache—poster color—and the effects must have been exceptionally brilliant and fresh. Laguerre overpainted them in oils, which was like a death blow. The oil draining into that aqueous color tarnished and sullied it beyond recognition. But the authorities announced that Laguerre's work was a success, because he had 'successfully mimicked the master'—he had followed the composition.

"In the nineteenth century, they set up a body to see how the pictures could be treated, the overpainting taken off, because they were the most important High Renaissance paintings in England. Those people carried out some experiments and gave up. Then, in the twenties, Roger Fry, who was both a critic-historian and a painter, had a go at them, although he knew nothing at all about conservation techniques. He made the situation far worse, and he

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totally overpainted one of the pictures a second time.

"A man called Kennedy-North worked on them for three years in the thirties, with even more disastrous consequences. He used wax resin as an adhesive to reline them, and he must have used over a ton of it—it was unbelievable. There were no hot tables for relining then—hot tables are supposed to heat the entire surface evenly, although they never do. He used huge tailors' irons weighing fifteen pounds or more, and his resin was not the right type. The result was that when the iron went on the back of the new canvas it was much too hot, and the wax melted and came out like a wave all around the iron, leaving great welts, which solidified immediately as they cooled. The consequences were quite terrible."

As it happened, Brealey had done a lot of work on Italian pictures by the time he encountered the Mantegnas, and he had also restored a number of paintings that had been nearly ruined by Kennedy-North. "I had those two areas of information," he said, "which meant that I was under great moral pressure from Anthony Blunt to work on the paintings. I said to him, 'Look, I will for the rest of my career be associated with these ruined pictures, which is not a good idea; the last person who touches them always gets the blame.' He was very amused, but over the years he went on pushing me, so that in the end I was very conscience-stricken, and around 1965 I did start to work on them."

He worked on them for nine years. Not exclusively, of course—he had to keep his studio going. Several times a week, though, he made the trip to Hampton Court and resumed the interminable labor of undoing the sins of other restorers. The working conditions were awful. "There was no heat in the winter—I wore two overcoats most of the time—and the pictures were in the seventeenth-century, Wren part of the palace, in a room that faced a courtyard, and the light wasn't good. There was no way I could bring those pictures to my studio; there was the insurance problem, to begin with. Each of them weighed so much from all that wax that it took several men just to lift it. For a period, they tried to make it easier for me by moving some of them to the Tate Gallery, but the space I was given at the Tate was drafty and dirty, and it simply had to be abandoned. The work was utterly frustrating. All that

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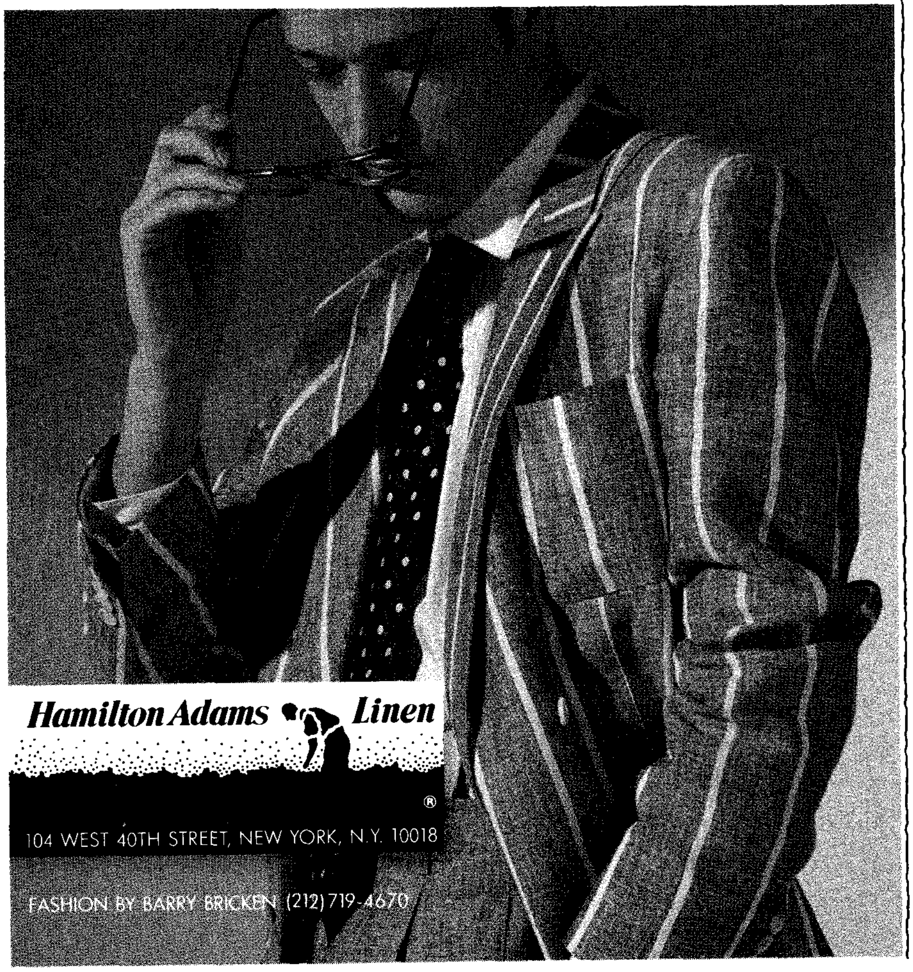

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going down very slowly, layer by layer, and then finding that the original paint had become so completely impregnated by the wax, all the way through, that it was soft as butter. The paint was completely missing from the crown of the weave; it had been sliced off by abrasion from the ironing. The whole thing was a nightmare. People praised the end result, but if I had it to do over again, and if I knew the real state of those pictures, I would not think it worthwhile. If something is gone to such a degree, then what are you doing? A form of archeology, that's all. You're not bringing back the artist. You may bring back the composition so that it's more readable, you may get to a few very beautiful areas that by some miracle have survived, but as a whole—and this was a series of paintings that showed a procession—as a whole it doesn't work, and the artist's intention has long since perished, so what's the point?"

When the Hampton Court Mantegnas were returned to public view, in 1975, Brealey's salvage job was hailed as a miracle of restoration. Anthony Blunt referred to it as "one of the most remarkable pieces of restoration achieved in the present century." Brealey didn't really need the acclaim. By this time, he had become conservator to virtually every great public collection in England: the Royal Collection, the National Trust, the Fitzwilliam Museum, at Cambridge, the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, the Wallace Collection, the Courtauld Institute Galleries. Five branches of the Rothschild family sent their pictures to him for cleaning and restoration, and his private American clients included Paul Mellon, Charles Wrightsman, and J. Paul Getty. He travelled a great deal, visiting the houses of clients throughout Europe, and not infrequently looking at pictures that they were thinking of buying; his eye for quality was known to be as keen as his insight into a picture's state of preservation. Most of the important figures in the international museum world made a point of visiting his studio when they came to London. They were always sure to see great pictures there, and Brealey was always eager to draw upon their knowledge.

Brealey himself does not collect paintings. He is building up a modest collection of Old Master drawings, but it would be absurd for him to buy pictures, he said—he couldn't afford anything comparable in quality to the paintings he works on every day. His fees as a private restorer were surprisingly reasonable—less than a thousand pounds, ordinarily, to restore a picture that might easily bring millions at auction. He had a reputation for being absolutely straight in all his dealings and also for speaking his mind in a way that made some people very nervous. "If he didn't think a painting was first class, he could say things about it that made me blanch," according to Eugene V. Thaw, one of the most successful private art dealers. (Dealers have to stay friends with everybody.) Although Brealey did not usually work for the trade, if a dealer brought him a painting of exceptional quality he would sometimes agree to restore it, partly as a means of making sure it did not get into the wrong hands. Thaw, who formed part of a dealers' consortium called Artemis, once asked him to look at a Rembrandt that Artemis had just acquired—a portrait of a bearded man.

"It had this characteristic problem," Brealey said when I asked him about the picture. "The painting was in a beautiful state, there were no major paint losses, but it just didn't work anymore, didn't read properly. The face and the hands had been overcleaned in a very awful way, but when I examined it I could see that in the background there were still traces of the original varnish, which was very beautiful. And so I managed to transfer those remnants of varnish evenly over the whole picture, and it made all the difference. Suddenly, the picture was readable again. I just did all that was necessary to bring back the conviction of the picture as a portrait and as a Rembrandt."

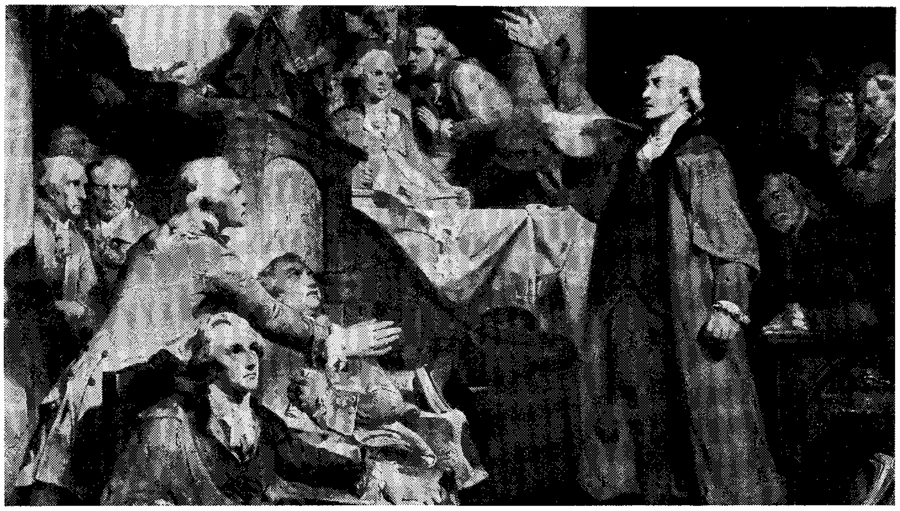
"How did you do that?" I asked.

"Oh," he said. "You want me to give away state secrets, do you?"

I told him what Thaw had said—that Brealey had cleaned off the old varnish very carefully, saved all the cotton swabs he'd used in doing so, and then distilled the old varnish from the swabs.

"That's exactly right," Brealey conceded. "The rest of the picture had a modern varnish, which was easy to take off. The problem then was simply to remove those remnants of old varnish which were distributed here and there in the dark background. I squeezed out each swab into a glass jar, and reduced it by evaporation, and sprayed it evenly over the whole surface. And then I discovered that it was possible to put thin-brushed varnish over the picture without disturbing the old varnish. It took practically no time at all. They had the picture back in three days."

GISELA HELMKAMPF, trained as a conservator of paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts at Stuttgart, was for seven years the chief conservator of the Area Museum Service for South East England. She wanted to work on great paintings—better paintings than the ones she had to deal with in the area museums—and so she came to work for John Brealey at his London studio. "To put it mildly," she told me, "I started over again from scratch. It was a total change in approach for me. Before, a painting was simply an object. Whether it was a Titian or a portrait of someone's grandmother didn't matter too much. But with John I realized that this was not so." Working for Brealey was an emotional strain as well as a revelation. "John is a moody man, and he does not hesitate to let you know if you've made a mistake." She eventually won his confidence; one of Brealey's stipulations in accepting the job at the Metropolitan was that Gisela Helmkampf come along as his principal assistant. When I asked her what it was that made Brealey so good at his job—what special combination of skills—she smiled and tapped a forefinger against her forehead. "It is not in the hands," she said. "He is not a practical man. It is all in the head. It is his way of seeing into pictures, and sensing what the artist is at-



They applauded the part about liberty and death, but they gave the guy who chose the meeting room a standing ovation.

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tempting to do. This is the key thing."

The Metropolitan Museum first approached Brealey in a somewhat roundabout way, through a former member of its staff who was a close friend of his. The Met's conservator of paintings, Hubert von Sonnenburg, had given notice that he was leaving. After fourteen years at the museum, he wanted to go back to Germany. Von Sonnenburg, a brilliant and greatly respected conservator, had been trained by Dr. Johannes Hell, Brealey's teacher, and when Thomas Hoving, the Met's director, asked him to recommend a successor he unhesitatingly named Brealey. The former staff member sent to feel Brealey out on the subject got nowhere—he and Brealey both agreed that it was not a serious offer. But about six months later John Walsh, the vice-chairman of the Met's Department of European Paintings, went to London and talked with Brealey. "Walsh had done his homework," Brealey said. "He knew how strongly I felt about teaching, and the need to try to raise standards, and so forth." Walsh said that the Met would be willing to set up a teaching institute within the museum, where Brealey and his staff could train others, and Brealey was immediately interested.

Two of Brealey's important private clients were very much in favor of bringing him to New York. Charles Wrightsman, the most notable collector on the Met's board of trustees, and Paul Mellon, the president of the board of the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., both thought the world of Brealey. Mellon let it be known that he would back him in whatever he wanted to do, and Wrightsman brought his sizable influence to bear on the Metropolitan's trustees. The chairman of the Department of European Paintings at the Met then was Anthony Clark, a great scholar, and a man known for periodic bouts of ferocious ill temper. Clark was very keen for Brealey to come over and form part of what he spoke of as a three-man team, with Walsh. It all sounded better and better to Brealey. He agreed to come, and began closing down his London studio—a process that took about a year, because of the number of pictures still to be worked on.

In June of 1975, the three-man-team idea went down the drain. The Metropolitan at the time was a very troubled institution. Hoving's controversial deaccessioning of paintings and other works from the collection in previous years had brought censure on the museum from several quarters. Staff morale was low, and there had been a number of resignations. Brealey was just finishing up the final work in his studio and packing to leave when Clark flew to London with bad news: both Walsh and Clark had decided that their authority was being undermined, and they had no choice but to resign. This put Brealey in an exceedingly awkward position. He had more or less burned his bridges in London—turned his clients over to two other restorers. Late as it was, though, he decided to change his plans. "The atmosphere at the Met must be so terrible," he reasoned. "I'd been warned by somebody on the staff that I'd be promised everything there but that I should make sure to get it in writing, and to have a lawyer standing behind me with a machine gun."

When Hoving heard that Brealey was having serious doubts about the job, he immediately flew to London. Brealey took him to lunch at an Italian restaurant. "I was extremely cool to him, and he was extremely nervous," he recalls. "I don't know if you've ever seen Tom when he's nervous, but he's all elbows, and his elbows are very sharp. To my amazement, he was thrashing his arms about at the table, and nine times out of ten—the tables in the restaurant were not all that big—his elbows would knock my arm, which made him all the more nervous."

In spite of the buffeting, Hoving got his point across. He assured Brealey that whoever was appointed to be the new chairman of the Department of European Paintings would be entirely sympathetic to what Brealey wanted. "Tom can be very persuasive," Brealey said. "And so I gave way. Now, of course, I'm glad I did, although for a time it looked very uncertain."

As it turned out, the Met did not appoint a new chairman of the Department of European Paintings for more than a year. During that period, Brealey, whose appointment as chief conservator took effect in the summer of 1975, was obliged to make a lot of decisions that would normally have been made by the department head, and he felt decidedly uneasy about doing so. When Hoving finally announced that John Pope-Hennessy had agreed to become chairman of the department, Brealey's level of uneasiness soared. Pope-Hennessy was one of the

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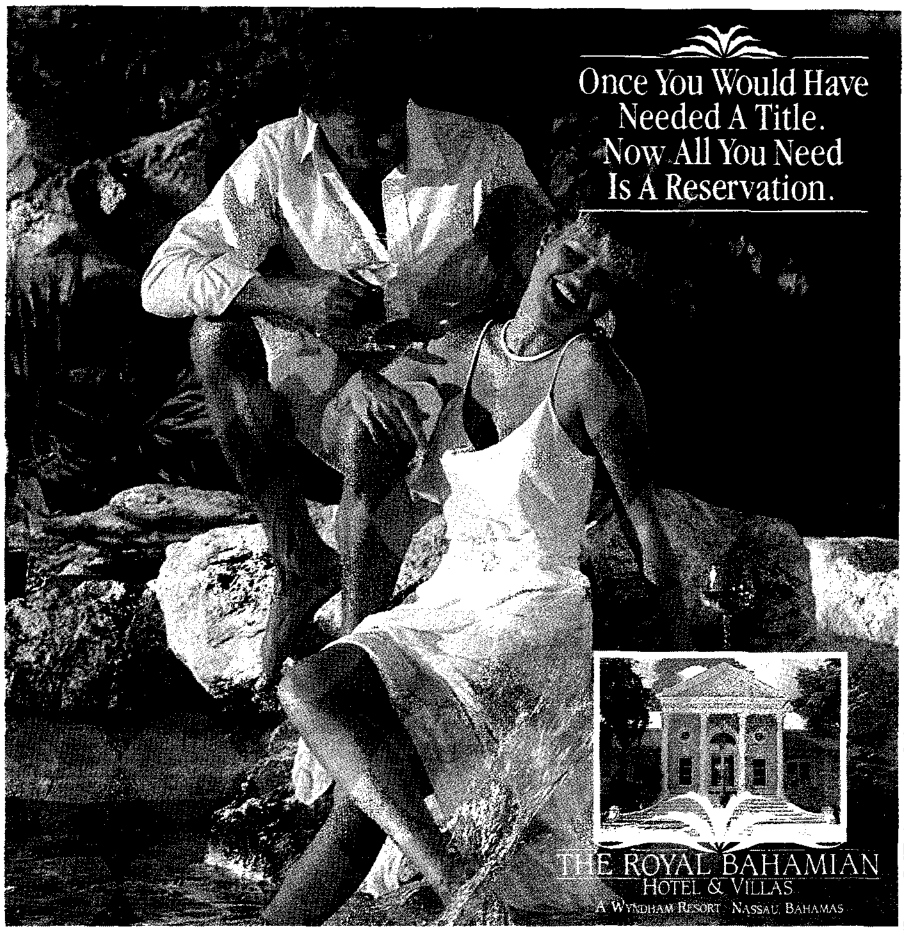

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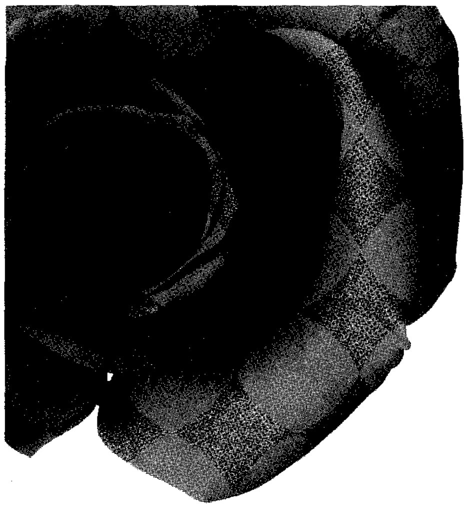

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most famous art scholars in England. He had been the director of two museums in London—the Victoria and Albert and the British Museum—and Brealey knew from experience that he could be difficult to work with. Brealey discussed his misgivings with Hoving. He was planning to visit London, and he volunteered to discuss the matter with Pope-Hennessy in person—a suggestion to which Hoving gave his enthusiastic assent.

"I went straight from the airport to his office," Brealey told me. "Pope-Hennessy was sitting behind this marvellous desk. He motioned me to a chair that seemed miles away, and he started talking immediately. He went on talking, buttering me up, going on and on about how I was the greatest restorer in the world and how I should never have been 'exported'—I've never forgotten that word 'exported,' it annoyed me so—and I waited and waited, not wishing to be insufferable. And then—this will show you how he is—he observed my face, and realized that I had not come because I was fearful that I was going to be sacked by him, but that I had other reasons. And he stopped short, in mid-sentence, and put a sort of choke in his voice—the man could have made a fortune on the stage—and said, 'John, you don't want me to come, do you?' And so, of course, I denied it, and started to temporize. And he got up, came over and lifted me to my feet, walked me to the door, and said, 'We're going to have a great collaboration. Goodbye!' "

In fact, the collaboration worked fine. There were a few run-ins between them, according to Brealey, and one occasion when a matter in dispute was settled by Brealey's threatening to resign. But on the whole Brealey and Pope-Hennessy, who retired from the Met last October, worked harmoniously together at the museum. "We were in the same boat," Brealey explains. "He wanted the pictures to look good on the wall when he rehung the collection, so there was mutual advantage." Pope-Hennessy's major reshaping and rehanging of the collection, which included the opening of the André Meyer Galleries of nineteenth-century art and the rearrangement of most of the older galleries, was completed in 1981. The collection had never looked better—or better cared for. Brealey and his staff had worked on virtually every painting now on view, and their efforts received as much favorable attention, in most of the press accounts, as Pope-Hennessy's did. People in the trade were also aware that Brealey's eye and Brealey's judgment had been an important factor in many of the Met's new acquisitions. Dealers who ask Brealey's advice about the condition of an important picture are not insensitive to the possibility that if he likes the picture the Met may want to buy it. Or, if not the Met, then perhaps the Yale Center for British Art, where Brealey serves as consultant and restorer, or the abundantly endowed Kimbell Art Museum, whose director, Edmund Pillsbury, often seeks Brealey's advice on prospective acquisitions. According to Eugene Thaw, the Metropolitan is the only museum in the world where the conservator has as much influence as the chairman of the Paintings Department. "Brealey's studio there is a real powerhouse," Thaw said recently. "A lot of collectors will buy anything he tells them to." Thaw and others agree, though, that Brealey's principal interest is not in power, influence, or acquisitions. His principal interest is in the teaching program he has established.

Since he came to the Met, Brealey and his staff have focussed more and more of their energy on teaching. The job of putting the Met's permanent collection in the best possible shape is largely complete now, and a good deal of the work in the studio is on pictures from other institutions. There are four conservators besides Brealey on the staff of his department. George Bisacca works exclusively on wood-panel paintings. Lucy Belloli specializes in twentieth-century works. Dorothy Mahon deals with American art, and Gisela Helmkampf deals with everything else. All of them work closely with Maryan Wynn Ainsworth, the department's resident art historian, and all of them are involved in teaching the students and interns attached to the department, whose number nobody seems quite able to pin down. Last spring, there appeared to be eight students (doctoral students in art history) and interns, or fellows (conservators at a more advanced stage, who have been working at their trade for a few years, either here or abroad). René de la Rie, a research chemist from Amsterdam, is in charge of the chemistry lab, and has two assistants of his own. Brealey runs the place in a collegial fashion. He encourages independent thinking and constant discussion of all problems, and he teaches mainly by example or on a one-to-one ba-

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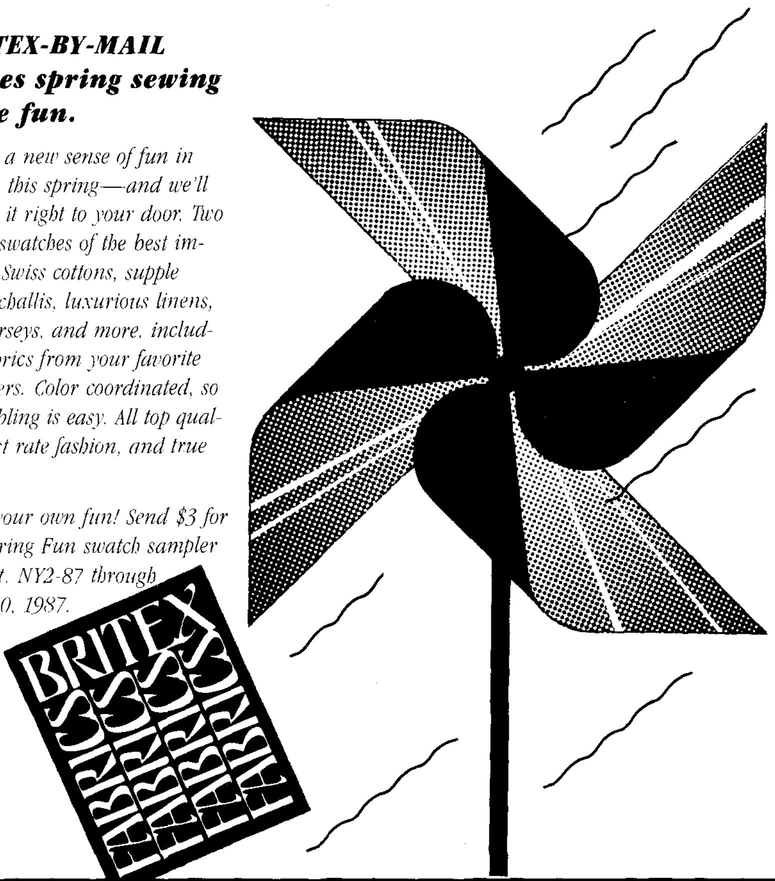

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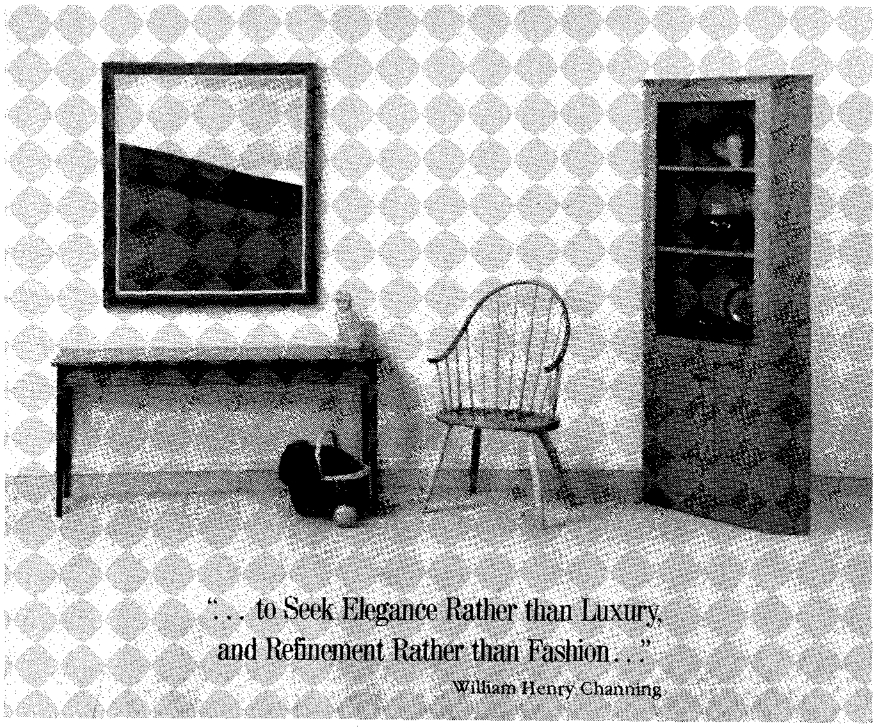
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sis. "He is very acute in sensing your personal weaknesses," Lucy Belloli told me. There are usually fifty or sixty paintings in the studio, in various stages of restoration. Students and interns work on important pictures, under very close supervision. "Good pictures are easier, of course," Helmkampf says. "A great artist communicates better, more clearly, more directly, so it is easier to pick up what he wanted. It is also important for the students not to be terrified, although this *is* very scary work." The emphasis is always on doing the right thing by the artist. In the department's library, monographs on artists outnumber technical studies by about twenty to one.

The usual period of study is two years. It used to be three, but Brealey found that students tended to become too comfortable, too attached to the Metropolitan's maternal embrace, after three years, so he cut it back to two. Many more students apply than can be accepted. In the summer, Brealey sends his students and interns abroad to look at paintings on their own. He raises the money for this in a variety of ways. Some of it comes from his Visiting Committee, a group of high-level museum men and collectors who act as a sort of private board of trustees for the department. Some of it comes from art dealers and private collectors. Brealey is always being asked to look at or to work on pictures that are privately owned; if the picture is what Brealey calls a "life-changer," he will sometimes take it on, with the understanding that in lieu of a fee the owner will make a substantial contribution to his teaching program. The same understanding applies to work he does for the Frick Collection, which retains him as its consultant and restorer.

For many years, the Frick's chief conservator was William Suhr, one of the two great restorers of his generation in America. (The other is Mario Modestini, who is still active in New York.) Suhr's work occasionally was held up to students at the Fogg Museum, at Harvard, and other technically oriented conservation institutes as an example of what not to do. Suhr, for example, painted two of the horse's hooves in the Frick's famous Rembrandt "The Polish Rider;" a four-inch strip of canvas at the bottom of this painting had been damaged before it came to the Frick, and Suhr repainted the missing section so skillfully that only an expert can tell it

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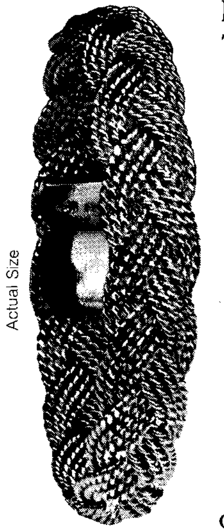

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from the original. (A committee of Dutch art historians now claims that "The Polish Rider" and many other Rembrandts are not by Rembrandt. If this is true, according to Brealey, it is astonishing that the artist who did paint "The Polish Rider"—one of the greatest pictures in America and a real "life-changer"—is not better known.) Brealey has not performed any miracles of this type. His most recent projects for the Frick—the cleaning of Ingres's "Comtesse d'Haussonville" and of the great eleven-painting series by Fragonard called "The Progress of Love"—involved very little inpainting, or retouching. But he thoroughly disagrees with purists of his profession who argue that areas where the original paint has disappeared should be left bare (as they are, for instance, in the Italian primitives in the Yale University Art Gallery). "That's the archeological fallacy," he says. "If you insist that there should be no inpainting, all you would see as you go around the world would be scars—scars rushing out at you from every picture."

The repercussions of Brealey's teaching have been felt throughout the country. When he came to New York in 1975, most American conservators were still in the grip of the "objective," technical approach, whose origins go back to the founding of the Conservation Department of the Fogg Museum, in 1928. This was the first institute of conservation in the United States, and its main goal was to establish the profession on sound scientific principles and methods. (Before this, restorers learned by the apprentice system, and kept their knowledge to themselves.) Two early students in the Fogg program, Sheldon and Caroline Keck, became the most active teachers and propagators of the new scientific faith. They taught first at their studio in Brooklyn, then at the Conservation Center of the New York University Institute of Fine Arts (established in 1960), and, from 1970 to 1981, at their own institute, in Cooperstown, New York. The Kecks and their legions of students went in for rigorous cleaning with strong solvents, and for the wax relining of paintings. Using wax instead of glue as an adhesive agent when applying the old canvas to a new canvas support was thought to be a great improvement, on several counts. It supposedly gave better protection against oxidation, moisture, and cracking. It also gave a rich, glossy lustre to the painting. Unfortunately, the process can be irrevers-

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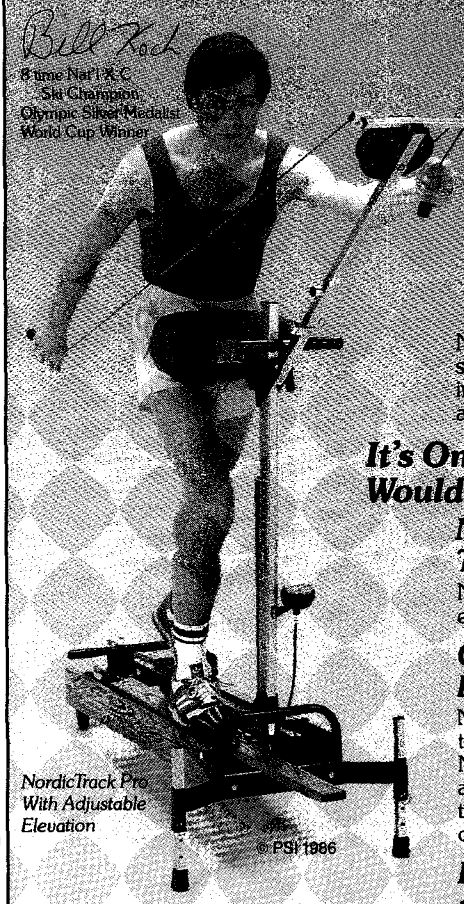
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ible. One of the cardinal rules of modern restoration is that everything done must be able to be easily undone. Inpainting is done today with watercolors or acrylics, which are soluble, or else with oil colors that are sandwiched between layers of clear varnish. But when a picture is relined with a hot-wax adhesive the wax sinks into the canvas and impregnates the paint, and it can never be removed. Since different pigments have different degrees of porosity, the wax affects them in different ways, darkening some more than others. Brealey abominates the process, and has rarely used it. Now most of the institutes have come around to his point of view. The Winterthur conservation program, according to its director, Joyce Hill Stoner, was modelled originally on the N.Y.U. program and on the Kecks' program at Cooperstown. When the Winterthur program started, in 1974, about ninety-five per cent of the paintings treated were given wax relinings. "That's now down to about five per cent," Stoner told me, "and people apologize for the five per cent."

Radical cleaning methods are also on the decline. In 1978, the conservators of the National Gallery in Washington were informed that a moratorium had been placed on the cleaning of pictures in its collection. The order came straight from the president, Paul Mellon, and it was rumored that Mellon had issued it after talking with John Brealey. Brealey says he had nothing to do with the decision; although he visited the National Gallery's conservation studio shortly before the event, he says, he was not even shown the painting—Rembrandt's "The Mill"—whose cleaning supposedly triggered the moratorium. There is no reason to doubt his word. Paul Mellon, however, had known Brealey for years, had entrusted his own pictures to Brealey for cleaning, and was familiar with his views. It seems reasonable to suppose that those views had something to do with Mellon's rather dramatic order, and with the more conservative methods that have been in use ever since at the National Gallery. (The new chief conservator there, incidentally, is David Bull, one of the two men who took over many of Brealey's private clients in London when Brealey moved to New York.) The major conservation controversy of the moment involves the cleaning of Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Brealey, who was not trained in fresco restoration and has never worked on a fresco painting, is reserving judgment on this one. "I seem to be the only person who has not been up on the scaffolding there," he told me, "so I can't really have an opinion." He did suggest, though, that a fair-minded assessment of the work in the Sistine Chapel ought to require that it be seen under normal lighting conditions, rather than under the powerful floodlights installed for the cleaning process. Michelangelo undoubtedly took the rather dim light in the chapel into consideration when he painted it, as well as the distance between the ceiling and the viewer, and keyed his colors accordingly; when the floodlights are removed, the cleaned frescoes may not look as startlingly high-keyed as they do to some observers at present.

Brealey's articulate proselytizing for his own views has not endeared him to American conservators who still take the position that they are trained technicians and nothing more. They criticize him for being "too personal" in his approach—a charge that bears examination. By what right does he place himself in the mind of the artist, they ask. How can anybody do that with assurance, three hundred or five hundred years after the fact? When he adjusts and manipulates the tonal values and color harmonies of a painting, how can he be so sure he's doing what the artist intended? Brealey loves questions like those. "Say you were ill and in the hospital," he says. "Wouldn't you prefer that I approach you knowing all I can about your history, about your family and such? Of *course* it's personal. You can't possibly know enough, but you try to learn as much as you can, and then you just have to use your informed judgment. A lot of people in this field say, 'Oh, no, that's not my function, I leave that to the curators.' But that's nonsense. They're just afraid to make personal judgments." What really irritates him is the word "cosmetics," which some of his critics use to describe his efforts to preserve the tonal balance. "The way the picture *looks is* the picture," he told a reporter in 1978. "The physical body is inseparable from the meaning. To talk of 'cosmetics' is to totally misunderstand the terrifying seriousness of this controversy."

ONE thing Brealey regretted in his work as a private restorer was that he was not able to spend more

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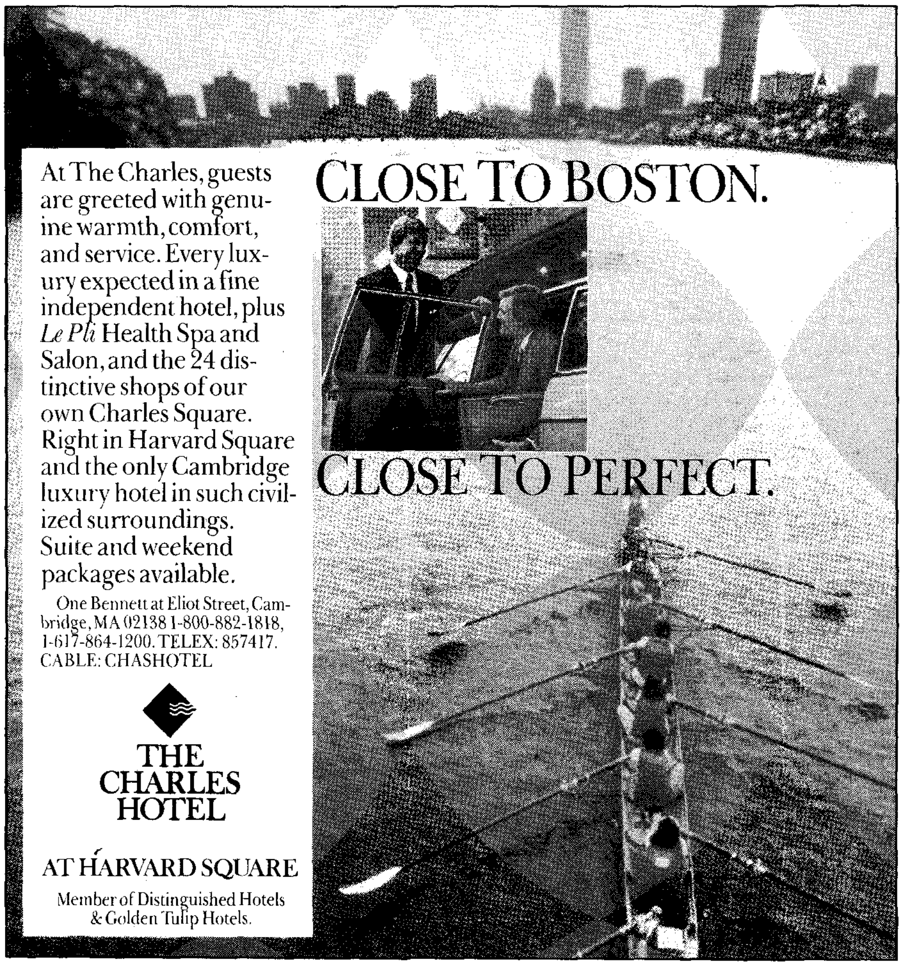
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time with modern pictures. He made his reputation restoring Old Masters, and, as a result, people stopped sending him modern works. At the Met, he takes a great interest in modern and contemporary pictures, and in the problems of preserving them. Some of these problems are insoluble; a great many contemporary pictures, in fact, are already at death's door.

"You might say that the trouble starts with Leonardo, and all those experiments he made, departing entirely from tradition," Brealey said to me one day last July. We were sitting in the principal workroom of his department, on the top floor of the Metropolitan—a long, high-ceilinged studio lined along one wall with windows that extend into the ceiling to become skylights. The light fell evenly on a dozen or more large easels, each holding a painting in some stage of cleaning or restoration: the Metropolitan's great Gauguin "Two Tahitian Women;" a Renaissance Madonna whose attribution was being restudied ("It wants to be a Bellini," according to Gisela Helmkampf); a landscape by Hubert Robert; a "Holy Family" that had recently been sold at auction, in London, for thirty-seven thousand pounds, to a dealer named Piero Corsini, who recognized it as a full-fledged Titian (the auction catalogue had listed it only as "attributed to" Titian), and who then sold it for a lot more than thirty-seven thousand pounds to the Kimbell Art Museum. Only two students were working at the easels; the others had embarked on their summer travels.

"There have always been painters who were frustrated by the limitations of their materials," Brealey said. "Even in the Renaissance, there were so few colors to work with. Only one strong green, which had a copper base that caused it to turn brown or black with time. Another green they got from malachite; it was very beautiful, but not strong enough. Often they just mixed blue and yellow, but that yields a rather poor green, like a child's color. There were these Byzantine limitations, and so they experimented—used pigments that were not permanent, tried new mediums. But, to put your finger on the real culprit—where the rot *really* starts—it starts with Sir Joshua Reynolds. There you have the beginning of the breakup of the whole workshop tradition. He knew perfectly well how to paint in a sound way technically. He wouldn't allow his students to muck around, but

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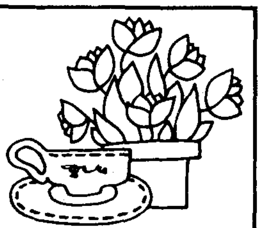
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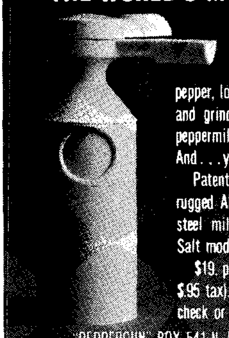
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he himself did the most deplorable things, and that is why most of Reynolds' paintings are now so terribly disfigured. Why did he do this? He succumbed to the temptation to become an Old Master in his own lifetime. Many important Old Master pictures went through his hands, for his own collection or for sale to others, and the qualities in them that he so enormously admired—leaving aside the drawing and the composition—were those qualities which can come about only through the passage of time. I mean the brilliance, the enamel-like, vitreous hardness of the glazes, that comes through increasing translucence. There are some benefits to the cooking of time, you see—it's not all decay and disintegration. I think he was trying to get those effects immediately, and that explains his experiments with using wax, and resin, and bitumen, and all those damn things.

"But, of course, the problems today also reflect the new attitude that came with those isms—Dada and so forth. The people who had been through the First World War turned their backs on the past and on the future, too, and made things that were not meant to last. And as soon as you get a breakdown like that there is no pressure on anyone to think about permanence. Built-in obsolescence—it applies to everything now. Contemporary paintings are incredibly vulnerable, in part because of the pollution in the atmosphere and in part because they are unsoundly painted—not all of them but some. Take this business of letting paint soak into unprimed cotton duck. Color-field painting. Its essential characteristic is the contrast of color, and this is being irretrievably lost. The sad thing is that in another twenty years to understand the vitality of the New York School you'll have to go to coffee-table books and look at those bright, shiny reproductions. I mean, the paintings are not even on canvas! Imagine what a clean bedsheet would look like if you left it hanging on the wall for ten years. There is a whole new species of conservators today, who are essentially launderers. They divide the picture into a grid system and locally launder one section, then move on to the next. They found very quickly that if they wetted the whole thing and began to clean it what happened was that where the paint was, the fabric behaved differently from the way it behaved in the unpainted parts, so you got the most terrible shrinkings and distortions. But

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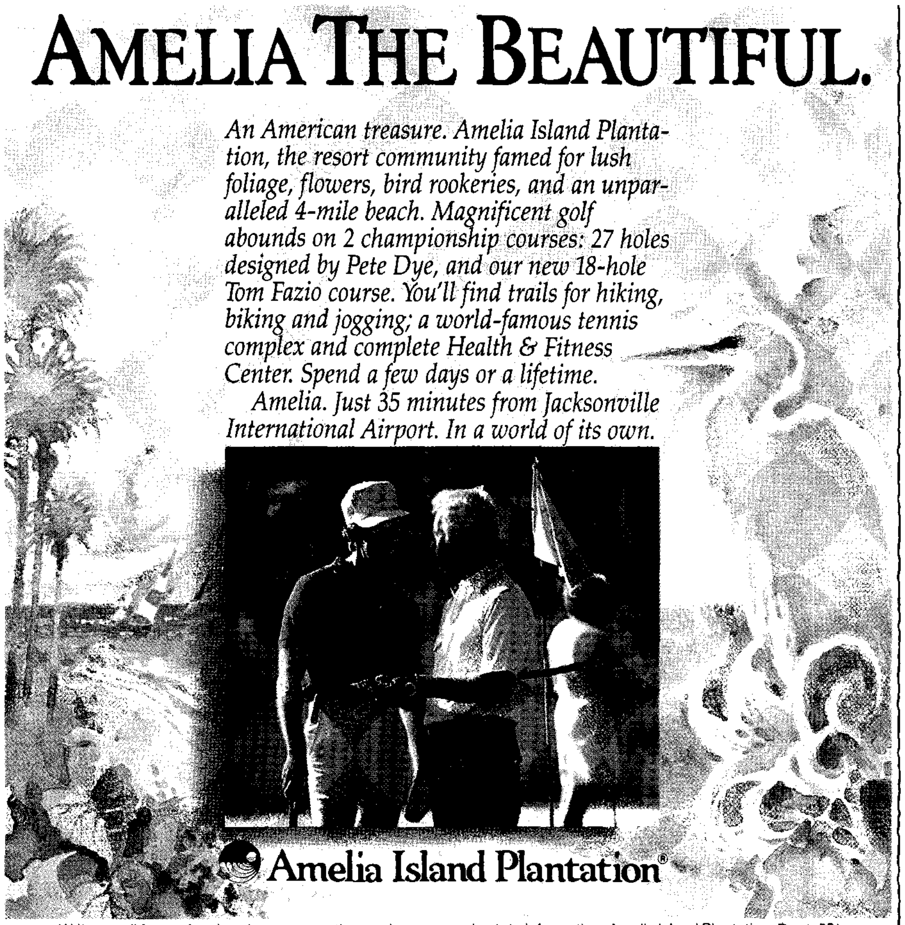

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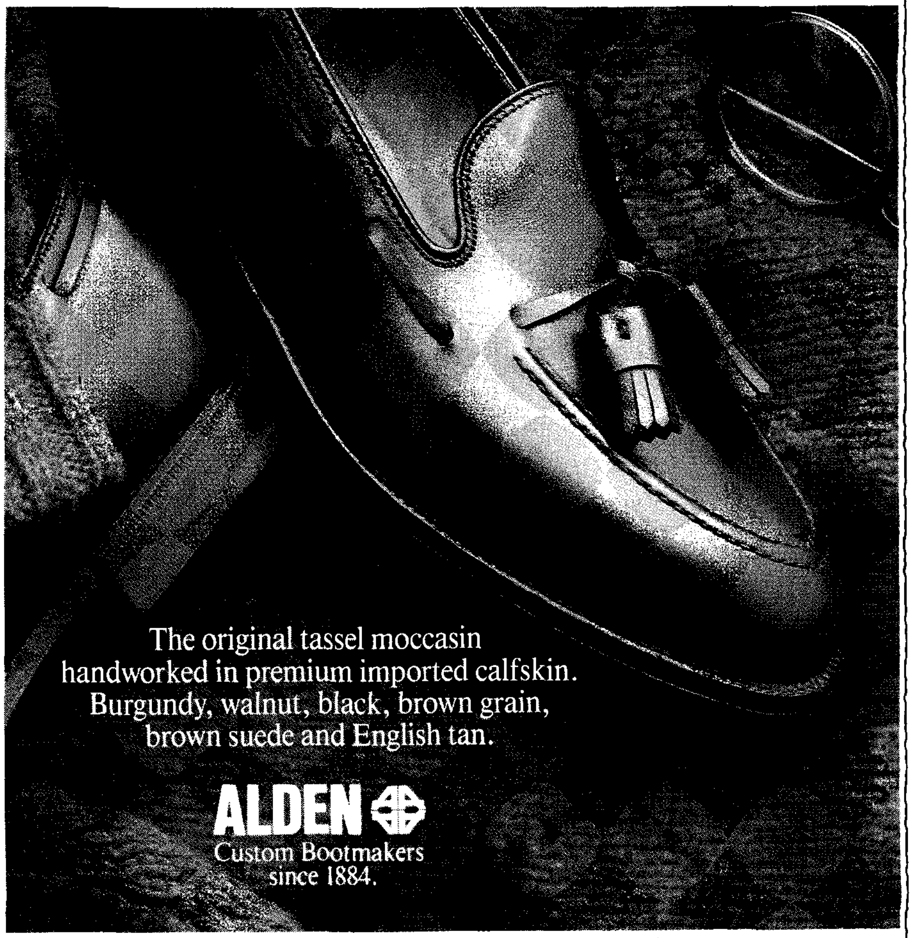

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"We have a very famous de Kooning at the Met, very large, called 'Easter Monday,' where some of the values have completely reversed themselves. De Kooning used to add water and salad oil to his paint; he whipped them up together to get a kind of emulsion, like mayonnaise. And now that oil has come to the surface and formed a very ugly rust-colored stain on the whites. The primary light areas of the painting—the highlights—are now darker than the secondary lights. And there's nothing you can do about it—absolutely nothing."

The problems are endless. Ordinary enamel house paint, which Jackson Pollock and other Abstract Expressionists sometimes used, loses its lustre and becomes dull and shabby-looking. Metallic enamels of the sort that Frank Stella favors change color even more dramatically. (Stella's 1963 series of purple paintings all faded badly within a year.) According to Lucy Belloli, some well-known contemporary artists she has talked with seemed quite interested in having their work last but showed no enthusiasm for suggestions about their working methods. Others are just not interested—they make art for the here and now, not for the future. Meanwhile, many of the signature works of the New York School in the nineteen-fifties and sixties have gone down drastically in brightness and chromatic intensity, and some (like "Easter Monday") have changed almost beyond recognition.

The artists are not the only culprits, of course. As the art historian John Richardson has pointed out, a large proportion of the world's Cubist pictures are virtually ruined, because they have been varnished. The Old Masters varnished their pictures for specific reasons. Varnish from natural resins not only protected the surface but also intensified the colors and added to the illusion of deep space in the painting. All varnish discolors with time, but sometimes it does so in ways that people consider quite beautiful. The deep, golden glow that we treasure in certain Old Masters is really yellowed varnish. (Duveen used to say that his millionaire clients liked their pictures to have a high gloss so they could see their own features re-

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flected in them.) When modern artists abandoned the illusionism of perspective and asserted the flatness of the picture plane, however, surface texture became more important than ever before, and varnish became largely superfluous. Braque and Picasso, in their early Cubist period, would sometimes apply varnish to small, localized areas of a canvas, so that its shiny look would play off against the adjoining matte areas. They never varnished the whole painting. But over the years dealers, collectors, and museums (including the Museum of Modern Art) have varnished most of the Cubist paintings in existence. "We have many times been entrusted with great Cubist pictures to have the varnish removed," Brealey told me. "But, unfortunately, you don't just get back to Square One. The improvement is great, but you've lost the original look forever. And this is simply the fault of ignorance."

Brealey suggested at this point that we go and look at some pictures. We went first to the André Meyer Galleries, where the Met's Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and earlier nineteenth-century paintings hang in one huge, skylighted room. He walked straight to Monet's "Rouen Cathedral," with its sun-drenched blues and whites. By some miracle, he said, this picture had never been varnished. "And because it hasn't been polluted by varnish you get this beautiful pastel quality. The cathedral has a dry, stony look, as though you could touch it and feel the sun on the stone." Monet, Pissarro, and the other Impressionists were all very responsible painters, Brealey said—very sound technically—and their pictures had not suffered much from the passage of time. We looked at a number of nineteenth-century paintings that had fared less well, including the familiar van Gogh "Irises," whose pale background had originally been bright pink. "He used a red that was unstable," Brealey said. "And he wrote a letter to his brother saying how pleased he was by the color relationships and the pink background."

The main galleries of older European paintings, where Brealey took me next, were surprisingly uncrowded. The vast multitudes of visitors who line up for the Met's special exhibitions rarely bother with the permanent collection. Brealey stood me in front of Velázquez's portrait "Juan de Pareja," which the museum paid more than five and a half million dollars for in

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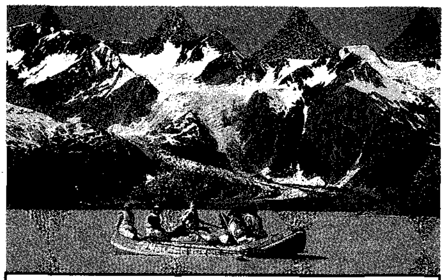

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1971. Here, he said, was another picture in an amazingly fine state of preservation. It had never been relined, and its surface, if you got close and looked up from below, had a very lively texture. ("Every painting is really a sculpture in low relief," Brealey often says.) The brushwork on the subject's white lace collar was particularly noticeable. "See how the nervosity of his brush catches the light," Brealey said. "He got that from Titian's late work—that broken brushwork. The test of a great painter is what he does with the whites. Michael Jaffé, the head of the Fitzwilliam Museum, has discovered two Titians in dark corridors in English country houses just by noticing the play of the whites—it was the only thing you could see, but it was enough." By way of contrast, Brealey had me look at Velázquez's "The Supper at Emmaus," which hangs in the same gallery as "Juan de Pareja." This painting had been completely flattened by several relinings, he said. "The figure in the foreground has lost all definition; his cloak used to be blue, but, as you see, it's gone black. The sense of three-dimensional space is gone, and the whole picture is just dull and lifeless."

In another gallery, he showed me an El Greco ("The Miracle of Christ Healing the Blind") in which two seated figures in the middle distance, a man and a woman, had become virtually transparent. The design of the marble paving showed right through their thinly painted garments. This was one of time's changes. Another aspect of the same process could be seen in the painting's upper-left-hand corner, where a man pointing upward with a dramatic gesture seemed to be calling our attention to a shower of fat grayish worms descending from the ceiling. Brealey said these marks showed where El Greco had wiped his brush. Artists frequently wiped their brush on the canvas, in a background area that would later be painted in. The overpainting had become transparent with age, and the brushmarks had reappeared.

Enormous color changes have occurred in some of the Met's most famous paintings. In the large Raphael altarpiece called "Madonna and Child Enthroned, with Saints," the Virgin's cloak and the inner vestments of St. Peter and St. Paul, which are now black, were once a brilliant azurite blue. Conversely, several early Flemish pictures have been gloriously preserved. "Look at the form in Christ's body," Brealey said, drawing my attention to a small, jewel-like "Lamentation Over the Dead Christ," by Petrus Christus. "You see how marvellously sensitive the transitions are, and how convincing? It's like a piece of sculpture. Of course, it has altered—there isn't anything that hasn't—but it still reads in a convincing way. It hasn't suffered from overcleaning. The greens have become brownish greens, but the cast shadows of those trees are totally believable. Flemish pictures have survived so well because of the perfection of their technique. They got the best possible sendoff in life."

"Crucifixion and Last Judgment," a diptych, by Jan van Eyck: "As I'm sure you know, it was transferred from wood panel to linen. That was done in Russia. The two pictures are still marvellous in spite of the fact that they suffered from the transfer. Instead of the smooth surface they would have had originally, from being on a wood panel coated with gesso, they now have a canvas texture, which scatters the line so you get a general softening up. When you see how perfect the drawing is now, it's difficult to believe it could have been even more perfect, but it was. On the panel, those dozens of little heads would have had a kind of vitreous brilliance which transcends what you see now. I suppose the transfer saved the painting—the wood was probably disintegrating. But in the many years I've been working I have never found it necessary to transfer a picture. There are so many other ways to hold the paint on. In fact, the only place they still go in for transferring in a big way is France. It's done there pretty often, even with Impressionist pictures, and the consequences are usually tragic. But it's an accepted technique. Traditions take a long time to die."

"Venus and Cupid," by Lorenzo Lotto: An astonishingly beautiful and startling picture, recently acquired. (It was sent by a dealer for Brealey to look at. Brealey agreed to clean the picture on condition that the Met would have first-refusal rights for its purchase, and then Brealey and Pope-Hennessy convinced the trustees the heavens might fall if they let it get away.) One of only two secular subjects painted by this Venetian artist (c. 1480-1556), it shows a deliciously nude Venus wearing a jewelled tiara and holding up a myrtle wreath, through the center of which a decidedly carnal Cupid, off to the left, directs a sparkling stream of

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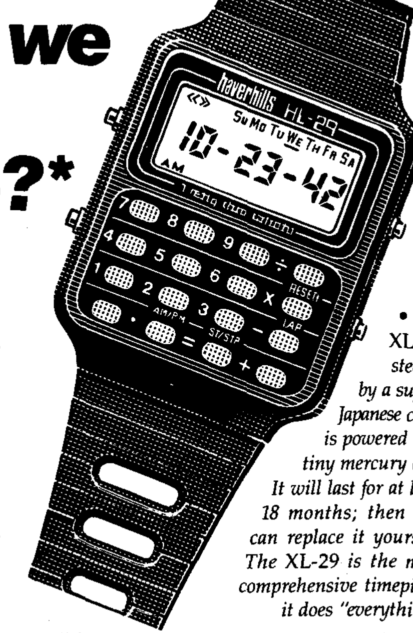

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urine. Much restoration work was needed on the picture, Brealey said. "Venus's private parts had been overpainted, so that she had a veil over them. And those exquisitely done rose petals on her thighs had been painted out. Someone had changed the shape of her crown. The red that you see behind her, that rich red of the tent, had been largely overpainted. Other censorings had taken place, to put it mildly. The child was holding a bunch of flowers instead of his penis—the flowers had already been taken off before it came to us. It was a difficult cleaning, and the inpainting that had to be done was very tricky." Brealey cleaned the picture, Gisela Helmkampf did the inpainting, and then Brealey put on the final surface varnish. I asked whether this was how they usually divided things up in the studio. "It's not the actual touching—who does what," Brealey explained, a trifle impatiently. "With any restoration, it's the thinking, the talk that goes on, the discussion. When you're faced with a problem, you sit on it, sometimes for weeks. You discuss it with the others, you look at other paintings by the same artist—it's really all done with the mind. The answers are found not with the brush but through this discussion that goes on endlessly."

He paused, looking at the Lotto in an intense way, as though he were seeing it for the first time. "We have a certain approach," he said then, as we moved slowly away, "which is determined very much by the atmosphere of this place. I don't want to use a tearjerker expression like love, which everybody flinches at these days, but—our approach is very warm. And it somehow works out that we are banished to our anonymity as individuals. I would have difficulty in remembering who did what on each particular painting here, because each of us comes in at different stages. These are our solutions—what you see on the walls. We're not slaphappy with pride over them, because it is an inescapable fact that the more you know about a painter and his work, the more aware you are of the limitations of our work. You know that, unfortunately, you are defeated once again. Every picture defeats you—you know that it didn't really look like that. There is so little we can do, considering the Byzantine limitations of our profession. With paintings, you can't put back the clock. But you can be aware. Our field, really, is the awareness of change."

—CALVIN TOMKINS

THE THEATRE

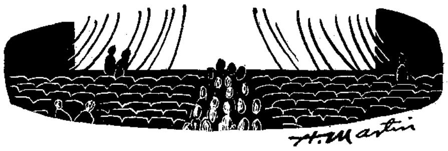
Happy Hunting

THE hunters of "Hunting Cockroaches," Janusz Glowacki's very funny and touching comedy at the Manhattan Theatre Club, are a Polish couple, distinguished émigrés, who live in a slum apartment on the lower East Side. Anka (played by Dianne Wiest, who gives a stunning performance) has been a successful actress in Warsaw, and at the beginning of the play she turns to the audience and delivers the sleepwalking scene from "Macbeth." This to demonstrate not only her extraordinary ability as an actress but her impossible accent, which prevents her from getting work here or even joining Equity, victim as she is of the traditional runaround—no work, no Equity; no Equity, no work. Her husband, Jan, an eminent writer, has been unable to write in New York, or to think of anything to write about. The time is the middle of the night, somewhere around 4 A.M., and he happens to be asleep while she recites. Not for long, though; insomnia is one of the things the play is about. Anka is in a nightgown most of the time, and Jan (very well acted by Ron Silver) is in pajamas. They are in and out of bed throughout, and their overhead light pops on and off. There is no real repose for this indomitable hero and heroine, just naps and sudden awakenings, as their preoccupations with such matters as green cards rise to the surface or the creatures of their nightmares invade the bedroom. The invasion route, by the way, is under the bed—a device that seemed to me a bit too whimsical at first but that I eventually happily accepted, along with all the other ideas of this original, delightful dramatist. Everyone who crosses their minds, in whatever capacity, crawls out from under that bed. There is an immigration officer, who shows their apartment to a prospective tenant (they are two months behind on the rent, but, broke as they are, they long to move uptown to, say, Fourth Street); there is a bum from a nearby park; and there is a quite detestable rich couple from Park Avenue, who might become their patrons. When the rich couple appear, Jan, bereft of booze, offers them sleeping pills and cold water. (It is unfair, I know, to give away any of Mr. Glowacki's jokes, but this one perfectly illustrates his humorous turn of mind.)

At the opening of the second act, it is Jan who addresses the audience, as Anka lies asleep. He sits in front of a map of this country, discoursing on, among other things, the straight lines between the states here as compared with the more irregular boundaries of the countries of Eastern Europe. These rigid lines could well illustrate, for these dreamy, idealistic artists, the rigid, practical standards in America that they must learn to deal with and accept. Between the episodes, there is much smacking of cockroaches on the floor, with answering knocks from the tenant below, along with the switching on and off of that light.

As directed by Arthur Penn, the comic spirit of the play, along with its serious strains of gallantry and worry, never lets down. The acting is good, and in the case of Paul Sparer and Joan Copeland, as the rich couple, especially so. As for the bewitching Miss Wiest, it is not often that we see a performance so dazzling. Heidi Landesman's setting of the squalid apartment, brightened up here and there by its current tenants, looked just right to me; appropriate lighting and costumes were by Rita Ryack and Richard Nelson, respectively; Jadwiga Kosicka was the capable translator.

AT the opening of "Death and the King's Horseman," by the Nigerian dramatist Wole Soyinka, the actors, in African costume, pour down the aisles of the Vivian Beaumont onto the stage, which becomes a lively African market. The characters display their bright wares and chatter and dance to drumming. Then a chief, the late king's horseman, in the person of Earle Hyman, makes his entrance. He must, according to an unbreakable tribal tradition, follow his master to death. The mood is cheerful, even exuberant; he has picked a young bride for himself as a farewell present, and when he goes with her into a little hut they are guarded by a group of gleeful women and children. But an English couple—a kind of comic-strip English couple—the district officer and his wife, appalled at the idea of the horseman's suicide, try to prevent it. They don't; although there is another snag, all ends happily—for the hero and his fellow-tribesmen, that is.



In the first act, the players, under the dramatist's direction, manage to evoke a whole strange and fascinating and beautiful world on that stage. In the second act, there is more narrative, there are more episodes, and, for all the passages of comedy and impressive poetry, there is far less clarity or vigor—a matter of direction, perhaps. At any rate, I found my attention wavering. Everyone does well; besides Mr. Hyman, I particularly admired Eriq La Salle as the horseman's son, Alan Coates and Jill Larson as the silly English couple, and Abdoulaye, N'Gom, Ben Halley, Jr., and Trazana Beverley in other roles. The arresting costumes were designed by Judy Dearing; the set, by David Gropman, was lighted by Pat Collins.

THERE is this much to be said for the New York City Opera's production of "South Pacific," at the New York State Theatre: it will not interfere with your memories of the original glory, if you were lucky (or old) enough to see it, or, for that matter, with the recording of it. It remains Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin's show, maybe to the end of time. (But maybe not; perhaps someday two performers of their talent and power and humor will be found to replace them in some future production.) This production has, however, been decently cast (there are two casts; I saw the first), with Susan Bigelow as the American nurse, "the cockeyed optimist," and with Justino Diaz as the French planter, Émile de Becque. Both of them, exactly right for their roles, sing well and act well enough; as for the rest of the company, there are no real treats, except perhaps for Tony Roberts, who gives an entertaining performance as Luther Billis, the comical sailor. But the fun is gone, and along with it the passion, and that peerless score and those deft words are now electrically amplified—in an opera house, for God's sake! I'd like to venture, anyway, that transferring "South Pacific" to an opera house is no promotion—it just seems displaced. It isn't an opera; it is a marvellous Broadway musical, and there is nothing better. Having said all that, I must also say that I was in tears at the end. "South Pacific," no matter what the circumstances, is irresistible.

—EDITH OLIVER

MUSICAL EVENTS

Oratorios

Handel's "Esther" (1718), the earliest of his English oratorios, and divided from its successor, "Deborah," by fifteen years, was the only one of them to be staged in his lifetime (in 1732, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, where the Philharmonic Society and the Academy of Ancient Music met). It is easily stageable, being based, like "Athalia," on a play-with-music by Racine, and tells of high events, but the action is not dramatic: Haman, the henchman of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), announces his plan to exterminate every Jew in the realm; Esther, Ahasuerus' beauteous Jewish queen, persuades her husband to countermand the order; and the Jews rejoice. The original "Esther," composed for the small forces of James Brydges' musical establishment at Cannons, is compassable by a handful of singers and players. In 1732, after the London staging, Handel amplified his score for oratorio performances at the King's Theatre, and with richer orchestration and grander choruses laid foundations for the great dramatic oratorios that followed. For twenty-five years, he went on reviving and, to suit each new cast, revising "Esther," adding here, omitting there. The work was popular in his day. In our day, performances have become rare, and "Esther" was one of the last oratorios to receive a modern stage production. (The Handel Opera Society mounted it in 1980 at Sadler's Wells, in an edition that sought to combine the best features of the 1718 and 1732 scores.) Twenty-five years ago, Johannes Somary and his Amor Artis Chorale and Orchestra gave the American première of "Esther" at their inaugural concert, in Town Hall. Last month, in Alice Tully Hall, they did the work again, at a silver-anniversary concert.

On both occasions, the 1718 score was chosen. In Tully Hall, one air, one chorus, and the fierce couplet of Haman's captain, "Our souls with ardour glow, To execute the blow," were omitted. There was a chorus of twenty-one and an orchestra of twenty; both performed with light, firm tone and alert phrasing. Julianne Baird, limpid and exact, sang Esther and the Israelitish Woman. If "Praise the Lord with cheerful noise"—a radiant air accompanied by harp and muted violins—made less than its usual effect, it was because the harpist did not fully command her very difficult part. The alto was Doreen Walker, a British contralto of sober timbre and earnest manner. (I'd last heard the big alto number, "O Jordan, Jordan, sacred tide," flamboyantly sung by René Jacobs.) Grayson Hirst was a fine Ahasuerus: tone and words were both in keen focus, and his characterization combined regality with gentleness. The other tenor roles—the chief one Mordecai, Esther's kinsman—were taken by Patrick Romano, a Handel tenor whose true, sweet voice and lively declamation give unfailing pleasure. John Ostendorf brought a touch of well-judged rhetoric to his portrayal of Haman; his three numbers were sharply characterized and potently sung. Two unnamed basses from the chorus gave an admirably fleet, well-tuned account of the bass-duet episode—"Mount Lebanon his firs resigns; Descend ye cedars, haste ye pines"—in the finale. Some of Mr. Somary's tempi seemed to me on the slow side. There was much subdivision of beats. But there was no plodding, heaviness, or flagging.

I have never heard the 1732 "Esther." It is unpublished, but most of it appears in a composite "Esther" score—assembled from the 1732 and later versions—that Friedrich Chrysander brought out in 1882. The first number, Esther's "Breathe soft, ye gales," breathes from the page with exquisite loveliness. Two orchestras alternate: pairs of recorders, oboes, and bassoons over soft organ; violins, in five parts, and violas over harpsichord, theorbo, and harp. There is nothing like this in the 1718 "Esther," which is a simpler piece, but one that is fresh and pleasing—to be cherished as Handel's first steps toward the later masterpieces.

The Maryland Handel Festival began a chronological traversal of Handel's English oratorios in 1982, with the 1718 "Esther," newly edited by Howard Serwer. "Deborah" and "Athalia" followed, and, at last year's festival, in November, "Saul." It was a noble performance: Winton Dean's phrases about the work—"one of the supreme masterpieces of dramatic art, comparable with the 'Oresteia' and 'King Lear' in the grandeur of its theme and the certainty and skill of its execution"—seemed not at all exaggerated. In three acts, between the extended, many-movement "Epinicion, or Song of Triumph, for the Victory over Goliath and the Philistines" and the extended, many-movement "Elegy on the Death of Saul and Jonathan," the tragedy unfolds through a series of carefully balanced, well-varied, highly theatrical, inspired scenes. Handel employs his largest and most colorful orchestra—including trumpets, trombones, drums, harp, carillon, pairs of organs and harpsichords—now grandly, now in small, subtle ensembles. The Witch of Endor as she invokes the Shade of Samuel is accompanied by sustained chords from two oboes and a bassoon. Through the triple-time music, the violins play a weird, ominous 4/4 motif: regular pulses disappear in strangeness; supernatural mystery fills the air. Samuel's spirit rises through the slow steps of two bassoons over deep pedal notes.

The Maryland performances are founded on the famous University of Maryland Chorus, conducted by Paul Traver: a hundred and twenty-five young voices (but not used constantly en masse) distinct in articulation, affecting in lamentation, fervent in affirmation, brilliant in songs of joy. Saul was sung with grandeur and intensity by David Evitts. Lorraine Hunt was moving and beautiful as Michal, Saul's gentle daughter, who loves David. Isabelle Poulenard, as Merab, Saul's haughty daughter, who scorns the alliance Saul proposes for her with "a Boy, 'till now unknown, Of poor, Plebeian Parents born," was not quite fiery enough. David was played by René Jacobs, a countertenor who divides opinion but delights me with his bold, very personal approach and trenchant delivery. Jonathan was John Aler, whose voice has become a sure, firm, well-mannered instrument, but whose manner is a shade placid. Mr. Romano, the second tenor—playing Abner, the High Priest, the Witch of Endor, and an Amalekite—was more vivid. Gordon Hawkins was a doughty Shade of Samuel. The Smithsonian Chamber Players, on period instruments, were adepts. Mr. Traver, conducting, welded the individual contributions into one sustained, overwhelming dramatic adventure. From the start of the Maryland oratorio series, he has been a Handelian of rare zest, grace, and energy. Each year, his feeling for drama has grown. This "Saul" was well paced. The dance-metre numbers danced, the lyrical numbers flowed, the theatrical episodes were emotionally charged, and the choruses spanned the range from merry exuberance to sombre majesty.

The performances are given in the Memorial Chapel on the university's College Park campus. In 1985, "Athalia" had a semi-theatrical presentation. "Saul" was more nearly a concert performance, but the soloists' entrances and exits were observed, colloquists related one to another, and for the supernatural scene the chapel galleries were used to striking effect.

THE University of Maryland has a Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies and is the home of the American Handel Society. The annual festival has also been the occasion of an annual Handel conference, sponsored by the university and the Library of Congress, at which scholars from all over the world present and exchange ideas. This year's conference had as its theme "Editing Baroque Music: Handel as Paradigm," and it focussed closely on the Halle Handel Edition, which has its editorial offices in Halle, Handel's birthplace, and is published from Leipzig and Cassel. Some years ago (as I reported after "Athalia"), Handelians' dissatisfaction with both the snail-progress and the quality of the edition led to serious proposals for an alternative, Anglo-American complete edition. Potential competition, however, was resolved at last in coöperation: a new four-country editorial board for the Halle edition (with members from England, America, and East and West Germany) was appointed, and new, more stringent editorial guidelines were drawn up. Editors and publishers from all four countries attended this year's conference, to discuss ways in which, preferably before the end of the twenty-first century, good texts for more than a handful of the larger works could be made available to students, scholars, and performers.

"Saul" and its performance provided a good illustration of what needs to be done. Chrysander's text, published in 1862, is faulty. So is that of the Halle volume, published in 1962, and widely criticized at the time but reprinted without amendment in 1981. The Handel scholar Anthony Hicks provided careful, lucid notes on the Maryland performing text, which he had helped to prepare. He remarked that "conscientious performers of 'Saul' today . . . have to steer their own editorial course between the Scylla of Chrysander's score and the Charybdis of the Halle edition." The conscientious Maryland performers of "Saul" went back to the original sources to chart their course. In the absence of any single, satisfactory edition, they had to assemble their performing material from four different versions. The chorus sang from modern reprints of an 1858 Novello score, restoring the original words where Vincent Novello had bowdlerized them. The players used corrected Halle parts, supplemented by photostats of an eighteenth-century set of manuscript parts in the Library of Congress. The conductor used a corrected Halle score interleaved with pages of Chrysander. Scholarly and musical skills, both fired by Handelian passion, conspired in the stirring enterprise. —ANDREW PORTER

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Like most American women in the 19th century, Mary Todd Lincoln lived her life outwardly within the confines of the female roles acceptable to Victorian society. Like more than 90% of married women in that time, she married.—*Mark E. Neely, Jr., and R. Gerald McMurtry in Crain's Chicago Business.*

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE CATASTROPHE

THE landscape is brown and dusty. Not like Africa when you look down from the plane and see it brown and dusty from horizon to horizon. Not like Australia, all brown dust, and, during the hours of travelling from west coast to east, marked out in rectangles of large-scale ownership. Nor is it like Texas, where the brown rectangles are so large. Here it is like nothing I remember, for every inch of this landscape is cultivated in a multitude of tiny terraces—lots and plots and fields that are not rectangular or square but have rounded ends, or are curved and lapped like patterns of fish scales or like feathers lying softly one against the other. The patterns of cultivation are a modest effort of human reclamation against savage erosion: it looks as if great claws had raked this land again and again but the people had come back and made their little fields over the gullies and the ridges.

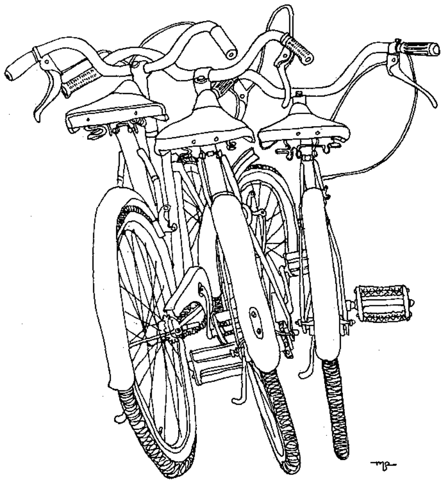
I was going to Peshawar, up in the northwest of Pakistan, because it is a center for Afghan-resistance activities. I had spent months reading books and articles about Afghanistan in which Peshawar, an enticing town born to be the setting for a Bogart movie, figures large, but seldom was it mentioned that Peshawar is the center only for activities in the eastern half of Afghanistan. The center for the western half is Quetta, southwest of Peshawar. The journalists do not much go to Quetta—a dreary place, I'm told—and this means that activities in the western part of Afghanistan are less often mentioned. To get into Afghanistan from Peshawar means going through the lands of the Pushtuns. Some journalists seem to think that the Pushtuns constitute all of Afghanistan's population. Indeed, one otherwise admirable book says so; it is as if Texas were to be seen as all of the United States.

I had been involved for some years with an organization called Afghan Relief, which had invited me to come from London with a group of filmmakers and journalists to see for myself the conditions of the refugees and the Mujahideen—the "holy warriors" of the Afghan resistance. Among these, rumors had it, were women fighting in all-female groups, with their own organization, training, sources of supply. I hoped to make contact with them, but this never happened, and the trip turned out differently. "Going to Peshawar, don't bother to expect anything," I had been told, "because it won't happen."

The flight from Islamabad takes thirty minutes, and you wish the little airplane would stand still in the air and let you gaze, and take in the intricacies of this September landscape reclaimed from dust. They say that when Alexander the Great's armies came down through here there were forests. The ancient and legendary city of Peshawar is over two thousand years old, says the guidebook, and so once it must have spread among forests and rivers. Probably this plain was first settled because of all the great rivers coiling and forking between the fields. Perhaps for centuries this plain was all villages made of mud on riverbanks and among trees.

We are approaching Peshawar. What are those strange-looking villages down there? They are not like the villages near Islamabad: the houses seem stubby and effaced, as if a great thumb had rubbed across them. Later, I hear these are Afghan refugee villages that are built by piling up the wetted earth to make walls, as children make mud houses—as people all over the world for thousands of years have made houses from earth. Their need is urgent and great, so the houses go up quickly, and they are fragile, vulnerable.

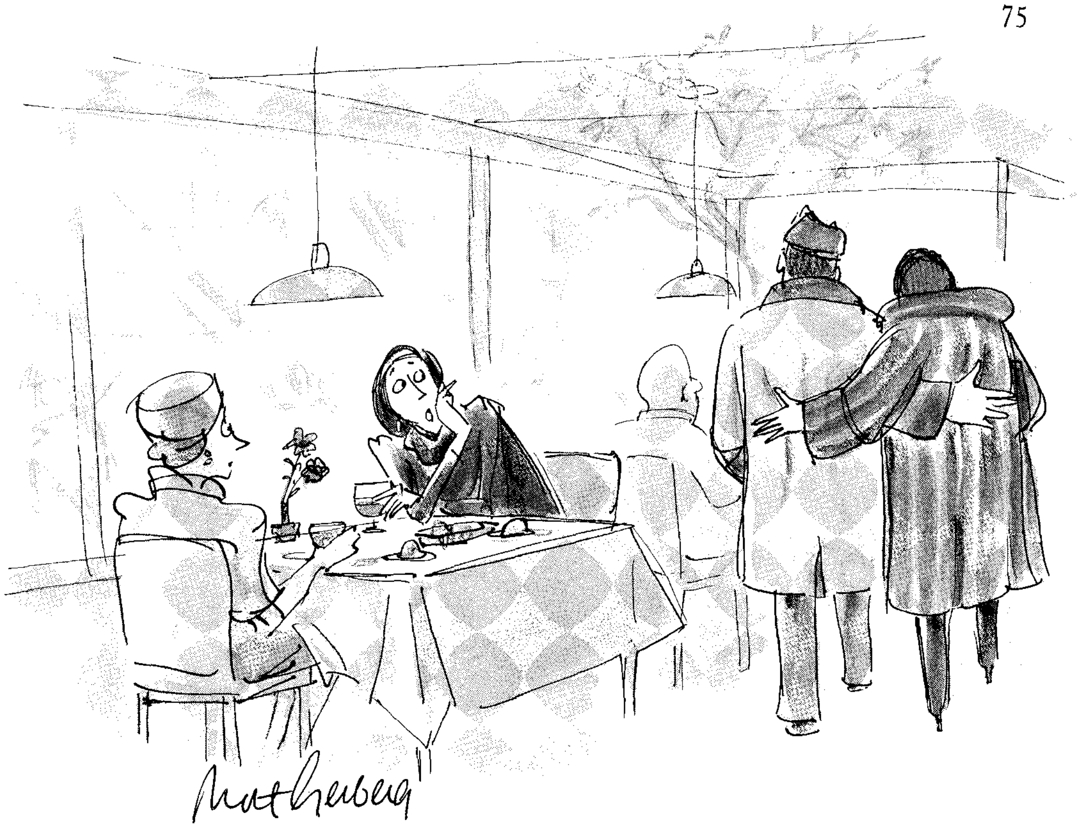
The aircraft goes in a wide sweep over the plain, with the Hindu Kush on one side and the strong evening sun shining orange through a thick haze of pollution. Coming in low, you can see that often on the roof of one of these fragile mud houses there is a tent or a hut with yet more people, more refugees from the Catastrophe, which is what the Afghans call the Russian invasion.



PESHAWAR strikes me as all confusion, noise, traffic—a ramshackle, haphazard place—but a friend who knows India says that Pakistan's cities are cleaner, richer, and better kept than India's. There are hardly any beggars. No obvious poverty, no people living in the streets. Peshawar's population has almost doubled because of the refugees. When the refugees first started to pour in, in 1978, there were Pakistanis who divided their houses and shared everything they had with them, saying this was their duty according to the laws of God. There are now probably about three and a half million refugees, but nobody knows exactly how many.

This has happened here before—the history of the plain is of continual invasions, conquests, overrunnings. Peshawar was once part of Afghanistan, and this naturally makes the Pakistanis uneasy: former conquerors are now their guests, or are contained, resentful, on their borders.

Never can you forget in Peshawar that buildings are short-lived, like people. It is not only the contrast with ponderous London, where buildings are rooted deep in the earth and make you think of continuity; in Southern Africa I have seen dozens of little towns, villages, dorps, lying just as shallowly on the surface of the soil, but they don't make you think of impermanence in the same way. There are only a few tall modern buildings in Peshawar, thank God—as hideous there as everywhere else. New buildings tend to copy older ones, so that a recently built school is two or three stories high and has an airy grace, thanks to memories of the arches and decorations of the Moguls. But a new building may quickly look attacked by time; already there may be a dark patch on the lower part of a white wall, as if the earth were reaching up to claim her own. Everything—not only the pathetic mud warrens of the refugees—looks makeshift, transitory, just put up or just about to fall apart back into the soil. That is the charm of the place, the fascination: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," says this



“That’s Stuart and Vivian Muntner. They’re a one-marriage family.”

landscape—the ecologist’s, the conservationist’s, paradise.

Our group had plenty of time to loaf around under the trees or to sit out at night on the lawns looking at the moon. We sat around. We sat. We sat. That is because of the way things go along in Pakistan—slowly, unpredictably, infuriatingly. Appointments are made and are not broken but simply do not happen. People do not turn up at the time set, or at all. Complicated sequences of events planned in the Western manner, which means with every confidence that they will take place, do not even begin. We were already, after three or four days, saying every evening, “And what do we *imagine* is going to happen tomorrow?” All the old hands we met—the Western doctors training Afghans, the people working in the hospitals, the AID workers—had acquired a defensive, watchful humor, recognizably a defense against hysteria: “You see, the bureaucracy here is . . .”

The four English-language newspapers we read every morning while we ate breakfast under the trees, watched by hotel cats, crows, and what seemed to be some variety of vulture, depict a country full of riots and crisis. Every issue had despairing articles about the state of the nation, but what we read in the newspapers was not mirrored in the people we met or in the life we experienced. The basic characteristic of the Pakistanis seems to be imperturbable, good-natured indolence. Charm. They are a charming lot. Charm is the quality that eases the way in a thousand transactions that would otherwise not go forward at all. When you think there is no hope of that permit, that plane ticket, that appointment, charm comes to the rescue: infinite reserves of good nature. A nation of charmers! How is this possible? Inquiries to Pakistani friends in England when I got back elicited cynical remarks, but I prefer to remain unenlightened.

Journalists in Peshawar are a study in themselves. Many are drawn by temperament to the place—a romantic, seedy little town swarming with arms and drug dealers and spies, adventurers of all kinds. There are hotels and bars where journalists and KHAD agents congregate. (KHAD is the secret police of the puppet Afghan government, trained and maintained by the Russians.) If some subject of interest is introduced, KHAD agents who have placed themselves just behind you, their backs to you, tilt their chairs toward you, as if in a comic opera, and it is said that mischievous people start whole tangles of false information just for the joy of it. The spies of Peshawar are famed for being able to accommodate multiple allegiances—two, three, or more. KHAD, the Russians themselves, foreign governments, the competing Afghan political parties in exile—all spy on each other, on the Mujahideen, on the refugees, on visiting AID workers, and on the innumerable journalists.

Any Muslim country is difficult for a Westerner. We were fighting them for a thousand years. We are full of ignorance and prejudice, and so are they. It is unfortunate that the West, and particularly America, associates the words “Islam” and “Muslim” with “terrorist” or with Fundamentalist Islam, such as we read about in connection with Khomeini and Qaddafi. This is only one strand of Islam and is not, in my view, the most important one—though it may, alas, become the most important.

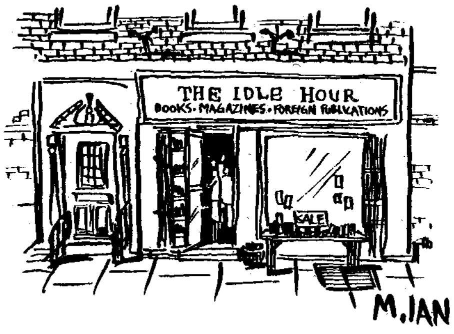
Pakistan is not Fundamentalist, like, say, Iran—not anywhere near. Attitudes toward women, for instance, are not consistent, though I’m told they’re hardening. A conventional woman is probably content; she is secure enough. I’ve heard such women hectoring and bullying their men in ways I found repellent. The slave’s revenge? But a talented, ambitious, or independent woman—for her it must be hell. Just as it was in Victorian England. A woman journalist, unless she knows the language, faces every kind of difficulty because of the attitudes of the men. But a man journalist cannot meet the women in the refugee camps. The camps and the Mujahideen are what the journalists come for.

THE Mujahideen stride all over Peshawar—thousands of them. Westerners think they all look like bandits, and are either titillated or put off. The Mujahideen wear baggy pants—the coolest garb ever invented, a Westerner who has donned them tells me, with currents of air flowing around you as you move. Then a long, loose shirt to knee level and, slung over one shoulder, a blanket, which is their bedding, their covering, their tent. They sometimes wear waistcoats. (I saw one waistcoat of good-quality English tweed with the selvage "Made in Britain" used as decoration.) They wear little Afghan pillbox hats, by themselves or with a turban around them, or else wear the Afghan berets. The turbans are many and amazing. If these men are not carrying Kalashnikovs—and they are not supposed to carry them in the city—it is as if they were shouldering imaginary weapons. These fierce men may seem to have come out of another century, and in some ways they have, but they are well informed about what is going on in the world. They have no idea how to present themselves sympathetically to the Westerner, adopting instead all kinds of heroic attitudes, talking about martyrdom, dying for their faith, seeking Paradise with maidens and pretty boys and wine. When photographed, they assume warriorlike postures. They do this because they think it is what will impress. Talking ordinarily, they do not use this kind of bravado. They have that brand of sardonic humor special to people up against it: black and wry and shocking—like Jewish humor.

These warriors move in and out of Peshawar from the battles that take place all the time over the mountainous eastern part of Afghanistan. They rest and they feed themselves, give wounds time to heal, visit their families in the refugee camps. They bring letters and messages. You will see two or three Mujahideen, or a group, meeting on a street: hugs and kisses all round. They are relieved to see each other alive—these comrades whom they last saw or heard of in battle. Their comradeship is strong; it is war comradeship, quite apart from the comradeship of Islam, which is another subject. When they are thinking of how they are presenting themselves to you, the word "Jihad" is used in every sentence. This is their word for their resistance, and it does not mean simply "Holy War;" it is like the Resistance in France during the Occupation. They all intend to fight until the Russians are out of their country. They say things like "We fought the Arabs for a hundred years before they finally defeated us, and we'll fight the Russians for as long." The Mujahideen have a hard life, and often a short one. If badly wounded in battle, they do not survive: there are all those great mountains to cross to reach hospitals. The boys growing up in the camps are their replacements. Every boy you see longs to be off with his father, his brothers, but some commanders won't let a boy fight until he is sixteen. Masoud, for example, who is continually besieged by boys begging to fight, sends them back to their families. Masoud is a commander admired throughout Afghanistan, by nearly all the Mujahideen—even members of different parties. He is the nearest thing to a national leader in this war.

Unless you have influence—and everything works on influence, on whom you know—impressions of Peshawar and of the Afghan resistance are often determined by luck: What groups of Mujahideen do you meet? Which political party will befriend you? There are seven major political parties among the exiled Afghans, all based on Islam and the Koran, and ranging from the bigotry of the Fundamentalists to the liberal modern attitudes of Haraqat. The Mujahideen all belong—nominally, at least—to one of the parties. These are not remotely like anything we have in the West, and, being based on religion, are hard for a Westerner to understand. They bicker, intrigue, and compete over issues we think petty, even silly.

The Mujahideen willingly take journalists into Afghanistan—not far, it is true, but this is because of the nature of their visitors, whom, on the whole, they tend to despise for their softness. If heroism has been your chief weapon for seven years, then heroism is what you value most. They tell scornful stories of filmmakers demanding to photograph battles who dive for cover when a battle starts. A Mujahid will then take the camera himself and film the action. Or of doctors who cannot keep up with them, who cannot exist on the minimal levels of food the Mujahideen get by with, who have to have special food and shelter, and have been known to faint at the sight of the terrible injuries caused in the battles. For this reason—the softness of the doctors—the Mujahideen prefer that friendly countries provide teams of doctors who will train selected Mujahideen in basic medical skills, so they may attach themselves to groups of fighters going into Afghanistan. They complain that journalists will refuse offers of journeys to Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, and the Liberated Areas, preferring to remain close to the border. One commander said, "If you go to Bahrain for a holiday, why not Kabul? We control it."



FROM the moment you arrive in Peshawar, Afghanistan enfolds you—the enormity of it, the horror, the sadness. Every Afghan you meet, Mujahid or refugee, is another tragic story. Each one is an appeal: Help us, help us! We in the West are ill-informed, they say—otherwise, we would be helping them. From the start of this war, the Russians have claimed, and might even believe, that the West, mainly America, has financed the resistance in Afghanistan. Russian soldiers are told that they are going to *fight against American imperialists* (even American Zionist imperialists—a nice twist); the Chinese; the bandits of international capitalism. They find ragged and barefooted men with Kalashnikovs, stolen from their own troops. Some Russians defect because of this, but a Mujahid warns, "Don't exaggerate this. One per cent, perhaps, are upset enough to defect to us. The rest are Soviet-minded, and they are taught to see us as animals to be hunted down and killed." Even now, after seven years, most of the Mujahideen weapons are captured from the Russians. The Mujahideen say that when officials of the United States first denied that they were sending aid they did it in such a way that it sounded as if they were in fact supplying aid but had to deny it. Now the Mujahideen say yes, aid is being sent, but what happens to it? They get very little of what is being sent. It is the major theme of every conversation with every Mujahid commander. "We are fighting for you as well as for ourselves," they say. "The Russians want what they've always wanted—to gain access to the warm-water ports and to take what is now Pakistan. Why do you not aid us? It is in your interest to do so." The theme that beats through every conversation, every interview, is this: "From the very beginning, the West has underestimated the extent of the resistance. We have been reading for years, and often from your leading journalists, that we are finished, ready to give up. This has never been true. You describe us as if we were passive under the Russians, occasionally making little hit-and-run raids, and not as we are—a nation continuously at war, with everyone involved. Would you like to see for yourselves?"

Our group sat for the whole of a morning in the headquarters of a certain political party while the Mujahideen commanders from all over eastern Afghanistan, from north to south, came in, three at a time, to sit for a while, answer questions, and then make way for others. They came from Paghman, from Baghlan and Bagram, from Kabul and Paktia; there were Turkomans from Mazar-i-Sharif, with their Chinese-warlord faces, and men from Nuristan, who sometimes look astonishingly as if they had just come from Scotland or from Kent. They have blue or green eyes, light hair, perhaps freckles.

One commander, just in from fighting near Mazar-i-Sharif, has come to get new ammunition: "It was a big battle—jets, helicopters. They come in from over the Soviet border and run away back there. They fight like cowards. They bomb us from a great height. They have burned all the crops—they waited until they were ripe, because they wanted to destroy our supply basis with the people."

Another commander, from the extreme north, tells how he and his band cut the pipelines of kerosene, gas, petrol: "We destroy them again and again. The Russians can't keep them in repair. They can guard them only in the middle of the day, for we control the night." Then he asked us, "Where are the arms? We have even been fighting with axes. We have no food—we have been chewing wool and leather. We do this until we grow weak and have to end a battle even when we're winning."

Another commander from the north says that families and dependents are living in caves in the hills with their horses and donkeys. Their villages have been razed; there's nothing left of them, and the irrigation systems have been destroyed. For each fighter, there are five dependents. The fighters take turns going into battle, in units of a hundred. "We have no medicines, no doctor, no food. Yes, we capture some from the Russians, but often the Russian medicines are things we have never seen—hypodermics and drugs. We don't know how to use them."

A commander from Kabul says, "We have two organizations—one inside Kabul and one out. The one inside is a sabotage organization. Everyone in Kabul is on our side, and that is why the Russians can't catch us. The women help us—even the children. We have people in KHAD—so many that the Russians could never catch them all—and they tell us when to expect attacks, and that is why we win. The Russians cannot move more than five miles from Kabul."

And through the long morning, again and again and again, from all the commanders: it is hunger and exposure that are destroying the Mujahideen. "We have no food. We have no warm clothes. No boots, only sandals. We lose our feet and hands from frostbite. In some places, people are already starving, and it is only autumn—there is the whole of the winter to come. Send us food, send us warm clothes. If you supplied us with enough ground-to-air missiles, we would defeat the Russians. Why do you not do this?"

And, continually repeated: "The West says we are disunited, because

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you are seeing things through your eyes. You are always looking for a single command over all Afghanistan. That is why you are always building up Masoud or someone else, speculating whether he will become a national leader. It is not the Afghan way. We have area leaders. They respect each other and work together, but it is not likely that a national leader will evolve."

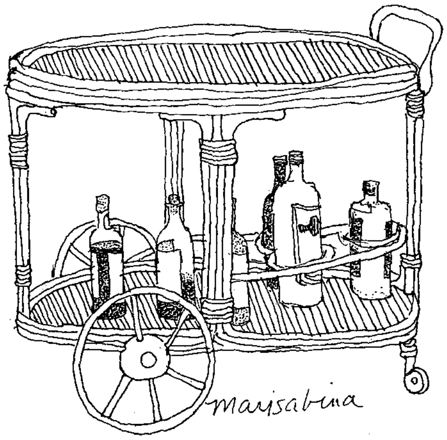
ALL these points came up again in an interview with a high-up military man in one of the parties. He would not be photographed or filmed. He said he was only one of the many who have worked undercover in the Afghan Army and, when it got too dangerous, have left for Peshawar, to help in coördinating the Mujahideen battles. To our relief, for by then we were suffering from an overdose of Muslim piety, he said, "I am a military man, not a religious one. This is the military headquarters of this party, and I am one of the people who operate it." A dozen men in Mujahid garb sat watching. "The men on that bench, sitting along that wall, may not look to your eyes like high-ranking commanders, because none of us wear uniforms. They are not members of this particular party, and you may care to draw your conclusions from that. I will answer all your questions, and I will tell you nothing but the truth, but journalists do a very great deal of damage, because few realize how much use an enemy can make of some apparently unimportant detail. You have not been trained in Intelligence. I have. It is not your fault, but I shall be protecting our positions as we talk. The main point, the key point, is that the war is going on at full strength, whatever you may have heard. It is not going badly, as your newspapers sometimes claim. Every house, every village is involved. If an area is quiet for a time, that does not mean it is subdued—only waiting, perhaps because of the weather. We will not stop fighting. We will fight until we win and the Russians leave, or until they kill us all."

He was asked about coördination between the different areas of Afghanistan, and the different parties.

"Two aspects, the military first: There are areas of Afghanistan where a commander may have under him men from all the political parties, and it has been like that since the beginning of the war. In other areas, groups of Mujahideen may fight each other, and there is every degree between these two extremes. But even the most stubborn and fanatical Mujahideen have come to understand that they must coöperate to win. There are generally respected leaders, of whom, of course, you have heard, and they coöperate with each other. The political aspect is as important: Pressure is coming at the seven political parties from two directions—from the outside, as, for example, when aid is given on condition that the parties coöperate on a certain issue, and, perhaps more important, from inside. The Mujahideen are weary of ideological bickering between the factions. There is a third aspect, on which I am sure there is no need to elaborate, for it is a problem everywhere and in every country. It is the problem of personality clashes, which in our case is exacerbated by the very great difference in ideological outlook. Nothing is easy in this struggle, and the question of ideology is perhaps the most difficult. The people you in the West call Fundamentalists are the most ideological, but they are also the best of the fighters. They began fighting before any other group did. They have allies and followers all over the Muslim world, and long-term this may create difficulties for us all. The other main group of fighters is as large but is less unified. They would like a return to the Afghanistan of before the Catastrophe, where differences of Islamic interpretation may exist side by side. This kind of tolerance is foreign to the Fundamentalists. A point of interest is that more clashes take place inside the Fundamentalist groups than inside any of the others. The problems arising from the clashes between personalities exist in every kind of group."

"Would you care to give us a strategic bird's-eye view of this war?"

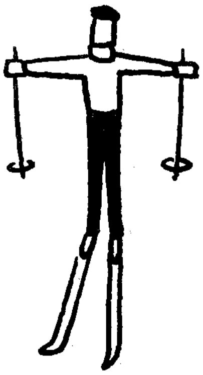
"I will, of course, not give you a full answer to that question, and you cannot expect it. For one thing, it would be too complicated to do so. I have been in the struggle from the first day, in different ways. I could write not one book but several on this very involved and intricate history. I can tell you today that there are three major areas of fighting: Herat, Kabul, and Kandahar. But this will not be true by this time next week—there will be new areas of fighting. In the last year, enemy pressure has increased fivefold. There are more troops, more sophisticated weapons. The Russians are using better tactics, and much greater ruthlessness. The casualties and destruction of matériel are greater on their side than ever, and on our side there is much suffering and many casualties.



"You have been told that eighty per cent of Afghanistan is controlled by the Mujahideen, twenty per cent by the Russians. From one point of view, that is true, but from a military point of view it is more useful to think like this: a hundred per cent of Afghanistan is controlled by the Russians and a hundred per cent by us—who is going to strike next, and where? The Russians cannot do as they like, even in the cities, which they claim to control. They never know what will be blown up where. They cannot move freely along the main roads; the main roads are dangerous for them. We cannot use them, either, but, then, we can operate on every kind of terrain and they cannot. We control the Liberated Areas, but the Russians will send their bombers in to destroy a place if something doesn't suit them. They destroy our crops there, and our animals. They are intensifying the policy of destroying our food. As we sit here, refugees are streaming out from newly bombed areas, because irrigation systems have been deliberately destroyed and the crops burned. Now you know what I mean by our both controlling Afghanistan.

"There are more Russian security posts being built now than were built in the last three or four years, but most of them have already been encircled, destroyed, rendered useless. Morale? Their morale is low, because the war goes on with no result, and our morale is lower, too. We have been fighting for seven years, and we are tired, and we feel that you do not help us.

"You will, of course, have heard the Mujahideen claim that they are fighting for you, and this is something that we believe—one of the reasons that we fight. It is extremely hard for us to replenish our supplies. It is hard to equip our men and to feed them. Last winter, we did not stop fighting but went on, and at a very great cost. Our men fight in sandals in deep snow. They fight in the clothes that they wear in the summer. They fight on little food, until it runs out. In Pakistan, they are not registering any more refugees. Our debt to Pakistan is very great. They are sorry for us. They help us as far as they can. We are grateful. But now when the refugees pour in after a new bombing on the villages, people may die from lack of food and water.



“We sometimes have more arms than we can use, because of our inability to transport them.” We had just heard a commander describe how he had captured Russian tanks and guns near Kabul but had had to destroy them all, for he had nowhere to put them. “We have enough of certain kinds of arms but not enough of others. As you have already been told by every Mujahid you have met, we need ground-to-air missiles.” (Since I left Pakistan, two consignments of Stingers—American-made ground-to-air missiles—have been received by the Mujahideen, who hope that this is only the beginning. At least now they are not totally defenseless against attack from the air, and reports in the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post* say that they have been bringing down an aircraft a day.) “We need more money, to buy what *we* know we need—not what other people think we need. We need food, we need medical supplies. We need these things fast, with winter coming. Have you been told that whereas once the Mujahideen were given food by the peasants now they will often give the peasants some of their own very scanty food, because the people are starving?

“The Americans—we are grateful for what they have given and are giving. We keep reading about these vast sums of money voted for us, but what happens to this money and the supplies? The Americans have expressed their support for our struggle, and we must believe that they mean it, but would it not be in their interest as well as ours to find out where these supplies of money and arms go? They send it; we do not receive it. In the middle, there is some kind of hole into which most of these things vanish. Again and again we read in your newspapers that such-and-such arms have been sent—but if they have been we never see them. Generally speaking, the Americans do not seem to have understood that war must be a combination of the military and the political. We are doing our part and we are doing it well, but we feel that we are not being supported adequately.”

He was asked, “Could the Russians leave?”

“You know, of course, that the Russians have never left any country of their own free will.” No one mentioned Austria. “If I were Gorbachev, I would not know how to leave easily after such bloodshed and such propaganda, but if some formula were found they would leave. They want to leave. No matter what they say, they know that we shall never stop fighting. I have worked with the Russians for years; I know them well. As a soldier, I admire them for their resistance in the Second World War; they are not good fighters, but they were good defenders of their homes. They have no soldierly qualities—they are bad shots, they are too heavy physically, they drink too much, they cannot climb or use mountains, they have very little endurance, they are lost without their equipment, their cars, their airplanes. We can do without these things. They cannot match us Russian for Afghan, but they send in three or four against one. They bomb us from so high we cannot reach them.

“When they use Afghan against Afghan, the Russians do not do so well. They do not understand us. They do not understand our kind of independence—anarchy, if you like—which is our strength. The kinds of pressures they put on the Afghan Army make it impossible for that Army to use Afghan fighting qualities. They will not allow the Afghan Army any initiative at all. We believe, too, that the soldiers of the Afghan Army are bad fighters because their consciences are troubling them. There always comes a point when some great scheme or plan simply collapses, fails, crumbles.

“The Russians have a certain characteristic that is to their disadvantage: if something goes badly, then they do not change tactics or try something else—they simply bear down more heavily, and intensify what they are already doing. They often destroy what they are trying to accom-

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plish. They are rigid and inflexible. They cannot listen. They are stubborn, and they go their own way. But, then, if the Russians were subtle they would have found a way out of this war without loss of face long ago. And they choose weak people as leaders. This is a disadvantage to them in the long run. I know Najib well." Najibullah is the Soviets' leader in Afghanistan. "He is a nothing, a weak man—how can he lead a country? He is not intelligent. No Afghan could possibly respect him. In order to understand Afghanistan, you have to remember that the Afghans are the most independent people on earth. As one who is trying to orchestrate them, when I say that each one is a natural commander and can never be a good follower I say it with a certain irony.

"You will have heard, I am sure, more than you need of Jihad, but in my view the term 'Jihad,' as the West tends to use it, is too simple a concept. The Afghan fights first of all for himself, his family, his village, his own people. He fights for a combination of these reasons, and he fights for his religion. When you hear the term 'Jihad'—and you will have heard it a thousand times a day—remember how complex it is, this Holy War."

He was asked if it would be difficult for the Mujahideen to stop fighting and accept peace.

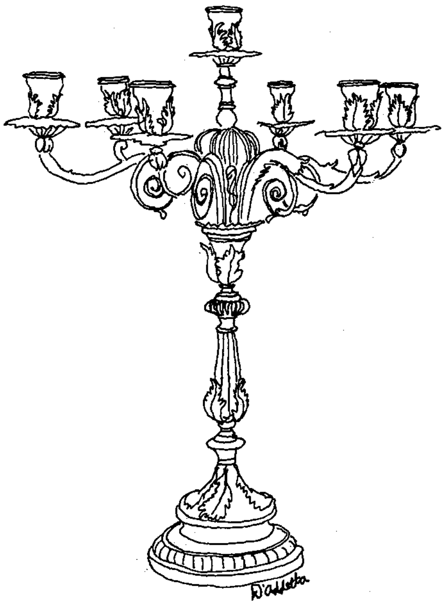
"Yes, very difficult. They are natural warriors. When this war ends, there will be a period when personal and tribal accounts will be settled. The war will cease gradually, but there is an Afghan characteristic that you must remember. It is that when we do decide to give allegiance to a government we also give obedience. A future government must tolerate very great differences of opinion—religious and political—but there will be one difference between before the war and now: before the Russian invasion there were Communists; when the Russians leave, there will be none."

A major theme of every conversation with the Mujahideen is that the political parties, which claim to represent the fighters, no longer do so and have more power than they should have. They are structured, and behave, like seven rival governments-in-exile. Aid and arms from abroad are channelled largely through them, and the Mujahideen have to play along with them in order to get what little ammunition or food they do get.

A commander said, "We do the fighting—we call the tune with the Russians. The parties sit in Peshawar fighting among themselves, giving themselves fat jobs, cars. They have become bureaucracies. If we won our war tomorrow, the parties would simply disappear. No one wants them."

THE Emir Mohamedi is the leader of the Haraqat Party. Haraqat stands for association with the West, liberal Islam, the restoration of pre-Catastrophe Afghanistan, in which different interpretations of Islam flourished. And in which the mullahs were not as powerful as they have since become; extreme faiths do well in hard times. The Emir is a mullah. I was nervous about meeting him, because my associations with the word "mullah" were oversimple. I had been listening to women complain: "The mullahs have us helpless in the refugee camps. They control what we do, and the Pakistanis allow this." (Pakistan has problems in policing the camps, because most men are not allowed into the women's quarters, while mullahs, being so saintly, are. The Pakistanis therefore use the mullahs to control the women.) I had not—still have not—met any of these bigoted and ignorant (mostly old) men, but some of my friends have and were dismayed.

The Emir's home is a villa like any other, but its garden is far from ordinary: full of jasmine, roses, plants in pots, shady bowers—everything that an Oriental garden is supposed to be. Against a background of shrubs was a low bed with a thin pallet on it, covered with a bright salmon and purple cloth—like a little throne. In front of it stretched a length of matting. I was with our group of filmmakers and journalists. We left our shoes at the edge of this matting. On the bed sat the Emir, cross-legged. He wore dazzling-white robes and, on his head, a lilac-and-white checked turban like a tablecloth, tied around an elegant black-and-silver cap. He dangled prayer beads; his hands, I thought, were those of a man of action, of affairs—muscular, strong.



"It is a matter of record that I started the resistance," the Emir said. "I came out with two friends through Quetta. We had no money—nothing. We went to the students and said, 'Will you fight?' We trained commando groups, attacked eight fortified police posts. The news spread like a storm across Afghanistan, and this is how the resistance started."

He was asked, "If there had been no Russian invasion, what do you think Afghanistan would be like now?"

"We would have been free. Is this not the main thing? I am surprised that you should ask. Afghanistan is not free. There are no human rights under the Russians, and when the rule of law has been abolished in a country it is a loss to the whole world. Afghanistan has regressed in all respects. We were going forward in law, human freedom, the press, communications, education. The country was already being modernized. Many of our young people were being educated abroad. We had the beginnings of a technologically trained élite. Things were changing very fast."

The Emir then spoke at length about Islam—how Afghanistan could have provided a model for a liberal Islamic state. "Afghan nationalism is bound up with Islam, and this has been intensified by the war. We are not going to take anybody else's Islam when we are free again. You must remember that our Sunnis and our Shias work together—they are not split, as in other Islamic countries. Before the Catastrophe, Afghanistan was in no way a fanatical country. There were fanatical groups, but they did not have power and were not generally respected."

Someone said, "The Russians claim to have freed women in Afghanistan."

He replied, "The women were becoming free before the Catastrophe. They could choose to be veiled if they wished—and some did—or to wear jeans and sweaters. Most countrywomen were not veiled—it is not their tradition. Is it not for Islam itself to change the status of women? Are you saying that if one country disapproves of another's policies that gives it the right to invade? Looked at historically, Islam has improved the situation of women; you have to look at certain laws in their historical context. You seem to forget that you in the West have only recently, in the last half century, emerged from a bad situation as far as women are concerned. Islam is a good basis to build on. Because there have been, and are, abuses, that is no reason to attack us. It is one thing to say that Islam oppresses women, another to say that men oppress women. The Russians oppress everyone. They offer no hope of change. We do offer hope and the basis for change. The Communists oppress minorities and religions everywhere, and no one protests. Are women the only oppressed people? Islam will reform itself, and the world can help us. The way to liberate women in Afghanistan is surely not by destroying their homes and children."

"The Russians take your children to the Soviet Union to be indoctrinated. Does this indoctrination go deep?"

"They are being trained to work for the Russians in Afghanistan and are being given information that they will see for themselves is false when they come home. Sovietized Afghans will be a small minority, and there will be great pressure on them to change if they do not become good Afghans. If they cannot change, then their parents will kill them. Afghans think long-term; they will say not 'This is my child' but 'This is an evil person.' It will be hard for the parents, but they will do it."

"The Russians say they are modernizing your country."

"Mussolini made the trains run on time, Hitler had full employment, but nobody now admires either leader."

"Do you get anything at all in return for the loss of your freedom?"

"Genocide."

After the meeting, I discussed the Emir with some Afghans. One said, "The Emir comes from an ancient family, full of poets and literary people, but with a strong military tradition. This is not an unusual combination in Afghanistan."

I wanted to know why he had become a mullah in the first place.

"You must understand that being a mullah does not mean being religious, or having a 'vocation,' in the Western sense. A mullah is a teacher of the Law, of the Traditions. It is natural for a man from such a family to become a mullah. The Emir was in Parliament for a long time, elected by his constituency."

Another Afghan said sardonically, "The Emir Mohamedi had to become a member of Parliament to get heard: in the old Afghanistan it was not enough to be a mullah."

AN interview with the "Minister of Education" in the Haraqat Party began with the usual appeal for aid and a statement of the Afghans' heroic stance. Then he said, "If we win tomorrow, we will have enough people to run Afghanistan well—there is so much talent, skill, and expertise going to waste among the refugees in the camps and among the Mujahideen. But if we don't win this war for ten years then we will suffer badly, because our children are not getting a modern technological education. Yes, some of our children are being helped, but not enough. The Pakistanis help with our children, but they are not able to help us as much as they would like, because they are also suffering. All the parties in Peshawar and Quetta have schools, but, again, not enough. None of us have enough

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money to pay teachers properly. The parents in the camps try to help, but they have no money. That is one problem—the problem of education in the refugee camps. Remember, there are very many children in the refugee camps. Most families have between four and ten children, and they are not being educated. The Liberated Areas of Afghanistan are another problem. We do have networks of elementary schools on the old pattern—mosque schools and others—but we have no advanced schools. If we built a secondary school, the Russians would at once bomb it. The Russians are logical. They do not wish us to have an educated population; they do not wish the Mujahideen to recover when they are wounded. That is why they bomb schools and hospitals.”

AND the refugees are still streaming in. Some observers say that many are dying when they arrive. The Pakistanis are reluctant to register any more refugees. They cannot cope, and who can blame them? The international relief agencies help, but not enough. Three and a half million people are a lot of people. Western countries take in a few thousand refugees here and there and make great claims for themselves. The Pakistanis have taken in millions, and have been doing so for years, and they are not a rich nation.

As a rule, a refugee has to be registered with one of the parties to get food rations. This means that people who are not members of a party are unregistered and do not get rations, and have to be fed by relatives who are already on short rations. To spell it out: some of the most independent-minded people, who do not want to be defined by a party, can starve or have an extremely difficult time keeping themselves and their children fed.

I have not mentioned the two million refugees in Iran. If the refugees in Pakistan are in a bad way, then those in Iran may be worse off. Iran is rumored to be working more closely with the Soviet Union, and what is going to happen to the refugees? I heard reports that for some time now the Mujahideen coming out of the fighting to visit their families have been handed over by Khomeini straight into the hands of the Russians. Somebody, being told of this, asked an Afghan, “But how does he reconcile this with being a Muslim?” The Afghan replied grimly that it pleased him to have the basics stated, innocently, like this.

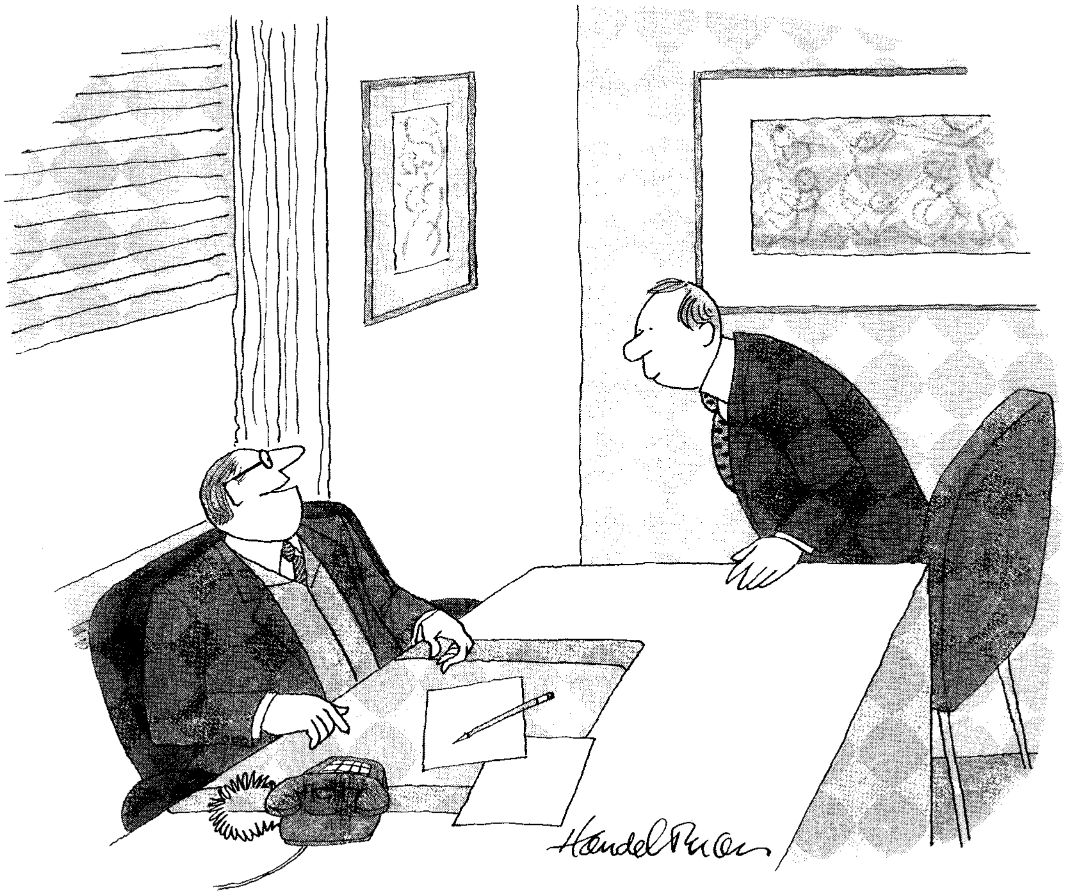
NOT all the Afghan refugees are in the camps. I spent a couple of days visiting people who had found a niche for themselves in Peshawar itself. They build warrens of little mud houses on an empty lot, or fit themselves somehow into existing streets. Three of our group—women—spent some time in the women’s quarters of one house. These were two little rooms with a veranda and a little courtyard—everything poor, clean, spare. The rooms were furnished in the Afghan style, with cushions or mattresses around the walls, matting on the floor. The walls were whitewashed plaster and brick. There were two young women and an old woman and many children, all friendly, crowding around on the veranda, anxious to talk. You always have problems talking with the Mujahideen, because of their determination to present themselves as intrepid and heroic, but with women there are no such problems. They tell you at once what it was like—how terrible, how frightening, how they suffered, how they suffer now. They weep; they tell you all the details that journalists long to hear and that are so hard to get from the men.

This family came down through the mountains four years ago. Their village, full of women and children—the men had gone off to fight—was bombed by the Russians. “There was nothing left of our village,” we were told. “In our family, we kept our stores in a cellar under the house. We went down there and were saved, though the house was bombed over us. There were a hundred people in the group that came out of the village, and seven from our family, including this child here.” (A bright little girl, now nine, said she remembers everything of that terrible journey.) “There was snow and there was ice. Many had their feet frozen from frostbite. No water—our children’s tongues were swollen from lack of water. It took us two weeks. The Russians bombed us all the way. They dive-bombed us day and night. This girl here”—one of the young women—“was on a horse with a baby under her arm. The Russian airplane came low, and she felt blood running. It was from the baby. She fell off the horse. The baby was dead. Of the hundred who left with us, only ten got through the mountains to Pakistan. Now we live here in this place. The men came after us, some weeks later. Then, when they knew that we were all right, they went back to fight with the Mujahideen.”

It was the old woman who did the talking—crying, laughing, miming the sound of the diving planes, the tanks, gunfire, shells. She was full of life, and anger. We all sat there close together, we women with the children, and understood each other very well.

Enough time having been allotted to politeness, the filmmakers asked if we might film them. At once, there was reluctance, uneasiness. The two young women said their husbands were not there and it was they who had to give permission. One was obviously frightened of her husband. The two young women were both pregnant; both were nursing small babies, and there were older children. These women, Afghan beauties, all swollen and milky and hung about with infants, were vulnerable, needing defense: it was easy to see them through the men’s eyes. We were looking at a stage of family life long gone in the West, blown into the past by birth control and women’s liberation. The bad moment passed, and the chat went on. They were complaining about the narrowness of their lives now, shut up together after their spacious life in the village.

Then, all at once, two men—the husbands—appeared, and everything changed. One of them was a schoolteacher. He had been fighting in the Afghan Army until very recently, and then had deserted with four thousand soldiers, who took their Kalashnikovs and six tanks with them. Hundreds of these men came to Peshawar. The other husband was a man who became for me a symbol of the frustrations of Peshawar. He was shorter than most other Afghan men, slighter, with a tight, gloomy look, suspicious—a bully. He was the feared husband. And suddenly the women had vanished from the veranda and were inside, looking out through windows, or cooking in a tiny cubbyhole of a kitchen, holding veils over their faces—well in the background. The two men had taken the women's places, sitting on the veranda near us with the children on their laps and shoulders. Obviously, they were very good fathers. The possessive, angry-jailer husband (he was a policeman), with his hot eyes, was probably as good a husband as he was a father, in the old style: uxorious, jealous, sexual, demanding, all-encompassing.



"That will be all, Mallison. I must say I like the way you kept your mouth shut throughout our little talk."

• •

The men began holding forth about Jihad and about the Russians. Did we realize that the Russians had killed at least a million civilians, probably more? Did we realize that the women and children we were looking at might just as well have been dead? Did we know that there were at least three million refugees here in Pakistan but probably nearer four million? What about the two million refugees in Iran? Did we realize . . .

If we could not film the young women, perhaps we could the old woman?

"Why not?" they conceded generously.

The old woman became impatient during the filming. These people do not understand anything about publicity. It is foreign to them. "Why do you want us to say it again—we've just told you?" she asked reasonably. "The Russians bombed our village and then we came over the mountains and . . ." But she was speaking mechanically now.

Suddenly, one of us asked, "Tell us about your home in Afghanistan."

And now the old woman bursts into tears, forgetting all about the camera, and begins a plaint or a chant like this: "Oh, Afghanistan! Afghanistan is my sweetheart. I long for my home, for my homeland, for my people, for my Afghanistan." I think of the irony that, of all the people in the world, the Russians ought to understand this, for they never stop going on about their homeland, their *rodina*.

The teacher pushes forward a little boy, who has a rough Kalashnikov made of wood. He shoots with it—"*D-d-d-d-d!*"—and shouts "Freedom and death!" when his father directs him with "Freedom or death!"

I ASKED about Benazir Bhutto everywhere I went. She is generally acknowledged to be the chief political opponent of Pakistan's ruler, General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq. You might think that in a nation where the veiling of women is such an issue someone would say, "She is a woman." Not at all. "She's too young," they say. "Zia is too much of an old fox for her." "She is nothing but a Soviet agent." "She will make a good member of the opposition when she's had more experience." But never "She is a woman."

THREE of us—all women—were driven in a taxi out to visit the family of a Mujahid commander who had become our friend. The route took us at first through the ordinary streets of Peshawar, lined with their light, graceful brick or mud buildings, freshly whitewashed or not, sometimes stained or flaking or cracked. The big markets in Peshawar are everything you would expect a medieval Oriental market to be—mazes of little lanes and courts and booths—and the roads running out of Peshawar have these same shops all along them. The shops are built of mud, or mixed mud and chaff. They have every kind of roof: reeds, old branches, yellow maize plants piled up into a thatch or heaped on reed or pole rafters. Some roofs are mounds of pale, gritty earth, and from this soil weeds and grass are growing. The booths sell fruit, vegetables, meat, manufactured goods; and the men, many of them Afghan, sit in the doorways watching the world go by, or perhaps lie on beds made of string and poles and placed outside the booths. Sometimes friends join them, and then these groups of men sit and gossip and stare at the cars and the traffic—the murderous traffic of Peshawar. But soon the sides of the road swarm with Mujahideen, and now many of them are armed, because Peshawar is being left behind. Hundreds of them, then thousands, then it seems that all this mass of people are Mujahideen. Among the men moves an occasional woman. You have to force yourself to notice them: their garb, like their gait, is designed for invisibility. A woman in a burka, interestingly, has a freer, more casual walk than one who is veiled. A burka covers from head to foot; it fits close around the head, with a little grille for the eyes, and then flows out around her as she walks. The woman inside is in a different world: she is observing, not seen—really invisible. (It goes without saying that burkas are used for all kinds of dangerous or shady transactions. The authorities on the frontiers between Pakistan and Afghanistan look at hands and feet: Is this a Mujahid or a journalist trying to get into Afghanistan?) A woman in a veil—that is, a cloth thrown across her mouth, leaving only her eyes visible—acquires a scurrying, furtive look. It is painful to see a woman you have been talking with, a human being, a person, transformed in this way.

(When I was back in London, I wrapped my head in a veil covering my mouth and my forehead down to the eyebrows; only my eyes were showing. I went about the streets like this for a day; I had become invisible. Having taken in with a glance my statement "I don't want to be looked at," people's eyes slid over and past me. People do not let their eyes engage with yours. Soon I realized that my eyes were trying to make themselves be noticed; in a Muslim country, they would be emphatically made up. I realized how, usually—in buses, on the Underground, passing someone on a pavement—I rely on my face to convey messages with a smile or a look. Now smiles were invisible, mouth hidden. When a mouth is covered up, you become very conscious of it. Soon it seems something forbidden, or unpleasant, or shameful: something erotic that must be concealed; even a wound. I began to wonder what sort of oral fixation or obsession had first ordered the covering of the mouth—which is nowhere mentioned in the Koran or by the Prophet. Somewhere in the early history of Islam, there must have been an obsessive authoritarian—someone like St. Paul, who imposed himself on Christianity, tormenting and humiliating women with centuries of prohibitions that could never have emanated from Christ. Liberal Muslims say there are plenty of texts in the Koran and in the Traditions on which the equality of women can be established for a reform of Islam: for instance, "Women are the twin halves of men," "Paradise is under the feet of your mother," and "What is a woman's property must not be taken from her." It is on this last text that Muslims are already establishing themselves as businesswomen. It helps, too, that Muhammad's first wife was a successful trader in her own right. Why do we have to bother about what was said and done centuries ago? Something in the human mind seems to demand it.)

The road was still crammed with great, glittering decorated buses, with motorbike taxis, and with cars, but now there were more carts drawn by bullocks or donkeys. And suddenly we were in the middle of a fertile, teeming countryside of fields, trees, irrigation ditches, ponds, streams. Every inch was cultivated. Along the edge of the road, contented buffalo wallowed or grazed, or were taken to ponds for a swim by half-naked little boys; the cows were sleek; the donkeys were well fed. I saw no neglected or badly treated animals. Yes, there had been one—a worn-out donkey in a Peshawar street pulling a cart owned by a desperate-looking Mujahid. In the city, even the hotel cats looked well fed; perhaps this is because the Prophet is on record as loving cats. Soon the road was being improved. Women, perfunctorily veiled, carried earth in shallow baskets. For about a mile, men sat, at intervals, chipping stones with hammers. Each wore protective glasses, which gave him a scholarly air, and his fingers were protected by shields, as if for ink. These scribes sat unhurriedly chipping away in the shade of wickerwork or cloth shelters like little sails. Often there were small graveyards, full of sharp sticking-up

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stones that looked like teeth sown in the earth. Sometimes the graveyards were for the Mujahideen, and these were like big ships sailing along the hillside flying a hundred gay little pennants, mostly green.

Slowly, this lush landscape changed. It became drier, stonier. The road, still edged with booths, was crowded solid with vehicles, people, beasts. Several times, our taxi was brought to a stop, and we were immediately surrounded by staring, sometimes grinning men: we were women, unveiled women, Western women. Little boys called out "Hello, how are you?," perhaps to show that they were learning English in school, and sombre bearded, turbanned men chided them. But they took no notice and ran along the side of the car, laughing. Soon we turned sharply off the main road onto a track, and were at once in a desert landscape. It was all red dust, stony, rough with gullies and ridges, and everywhere old buildings were subsiding back to the earth, and the stubs of old huts—hard, shiny red protuberances—showed just above the soil. The dust blew everywhere; the blue sky was veiled by dust. There were brickyards—a brick being the form that dust takes first in its ascent away from itself. Here and there was a tent, perhaps taking advantage of a lone tree or bush: a dwelling for an Afghan refugee family. The tents have taken a step up toward being a house: here a tent can be a roof, with mud walls built up around it two, three, or more feet high. They are red with dust; the few trees are dusty. A herd of cattle is being driven quickly across the red expanse to some grazing that is well out of sight. The fertile landscape is not more than four or five miles distant, but that is hard to believe here. The red dust of the plain stretches away and away, bounded by a line of green that seems to be immediately under the Hindu Kush foothills: miles of dust, earth, stones.

A low earth wall, miles long, curves away on one side of the plain. Behind it is a Mujahideen encampment belonging to one of the political parties. Groups of Mujahideen wander across the dust expanse and disappear behind the wall. The long, smooth red wall with the blue sky beyond makes me think of parts of Spain—the grandeur of it, the solitariness. But behind that wall armed men swarm, thousands of them. This landscape only seems empty.

Soon we were in a little village of the mud houses the refugees make for themselves, and now began one of the muddles that seem unavoidable in that part of the world. We had been invited to visit the commander and also his family. Again, we had been told that it was permitted to film his women. But he was not there. His aides did not know what had happened to him; he had not been home for three days. He had gone off into the fighting in the valley, they thought. His mother and wife were worried about him. (He turned up next day, apologetic but not explanatory about the incident.) The aides knew nothing about filming the family.

Again, we three women were taken into the women's quarters at the back. These women were much better off than most: they had space. A big mud wall enclosed a large yard, where three horses were feeding on maize stalks like those we had seen carted along the roads for fodder. There were chickens. In a niche in the mud wall was a little garden about two yards square, with jasmine and roses: dry, dusty, but it was a garden. Two young women, the wives of the commander and his brother, also a commander, were both pregnant, and were nursing babies, and each had a larger child as well. The older children were playing with a bird in a small string cage. It was like a partridge. It was their pet: I think it had a hard time of it. Both young women were beauties of a certain Afghan type: they had heart-shaped faces with wide cheekbones, and full, sensuous mouths but with short upper lips showing white teeth. Their large green eyes, frank and direct and candid, were a world away from the dark, secretive eyes of their Pakistani neighbors. They walked and held themselves like mountain women.

There was an old woman in command of everything—sixty years old, the commander's mother. She was formidable. What we had been told of the surprises of purdah at once came to life: we had not even sat down before she flung up her skirt to show her naked stomach. It was swollen. She had a growth. It was not painful, she said, but not operable. She had visited a clinic run by the doctors in exile from Kabul, but they had very few medicines. We asked these young women if two of us might film and photograph them, but their husbands were not present to give permission. The old woman and the children—yes, that was different.

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The two families lived in two smallish rooms with a veranda joining them. The walls were of cement, unpainted. Matting covered the floors. In one corner was a great pile of bedding, reaching almost to the ceiling, and the usual mattresses around the walls were covered with bright cloth. The women wore pretty, bright dresses, earrings, necklaces, bangles. This was cheap jewelry, of beads, plastic. When the war began, the women of Afghanistan stripped themselves of their good jewelry, anything of value, and gave it to the fighters to buy guns and arms. Pack animals loaded with this jewelry were driven over the mountains to the camps in Pakistan. Women arriving as refugees in the camps were unlikely to have much left; what they did have was sold for food. The bazaars of Peshawar were full of their necklaces, bracelets, earrings. I bought a necklace: twenty-one complicated copper pendants sewn onto a brocade braid. It has the intensely private, personal look and feel of an article much used. It is made to be worn close around the throat. It lies on a table in my room and seems to pull my eyes toward it. "Don't forget me," it says.

It was the old woman who did the talking: animated, vigorous, confident. When her sons went into battle, they left the children in her care, not their wives'. Their story began, of course, "And then the Russians bombed us and destroyed our food and we came across the mountains." Their life here, she said, was poor and dull. At home, they had everything—everyone was happy in Afghanistan before the Catastrophe. Now they never left this camp. Where could they go? And they had no clothes. The children had only what they were wearing now—little cotton dresses and shirts and pants. The winter was coming. "Besides," said the old woman, "we all feel safe here, surrounded by our

Mujahideen. In Peshawar, people get killed by KHAD, by the Russians."

We asked about the bands of women fighters we had heard about in Europe. Had they heard of them? Did they exist?

"Oh, yes," said the old woman at once. "There is one near Herat." She herself came from Herat. "This woman commander is called Maryam. She was the only child of her father, who said, 'I have only one child, no son, and she must go to Jihad.' He tied his ammunition belt around her, and his men accepted her. She is famous. She is as brave as a man. She says, 'When I find a man as brave as I am, I will marry him.' But she is thirty-five years old, and, of course, she cannot marry until we win the war. She is very clever, this woman commander. For instance, once, when she knew that the Russians were coming, she made the village people drive cows and chickens across a bridge. The Russian soldiers are badly fed, and she knew they would stop to chase the cows and chickens. When they got out of the tanks, her soldiers killed them all. Another time, the Russians came and she said to them, 'Come in, you are our guests. Sit down.' They sat down, and she and her soldiers poured gasoline around the place and set fire to it, and the soldiers burned to death. And there is another woman commander in Panjshir. I have heard of her."

The old woman said that two thousand of her tribe were killed in Herat; twenty-six were killed by napalm as they stood in prayer. "Herat is wearing white," she said. When Afghans say someone is wearing white, it means he has his shroud on—is ready to die. She said, "Why does not the world complain about the destruction of Herat? It was so beautiful, and now it is rubble. Why do you let the Russians behave like savages? And Paghman, too—it was so beautiful." Paghman, outside Kabul, was once full of gardens, orchards, and irrigation systems. It has been devasted by bombing.

The women kept offering us tea, which we refused, for their offering meant that they had no tea; if they had had any, it would simply have been brought in. Sitting there with them, all so friendly and sociable and gossipy, inside walls that shut out the world, and with the big, brave armed men out there in front, I found myself thinking, "Ah well, why not leave it all to the men?" (It was exactly as I once felt after five days in the Middlesex Hospital in London, cosseted and protected. Coming out, I could not believe I'd ever be able to deal with the traffic, the streets, the struggle of daily life. This state of mind lasted a day or two.) I am sure that it would be easy to fall victim to purdah and soon begin to think that no other way of life was possible.

Later, we began to ask all the Mujahideen we met about Maryam, but they only smiled politely. They told us that the women help the Mujahideen all the time in the war. In the towns, they conceal the Mujahideen, find them hiding places from the Russians, carry ammunition and messages—the war could not go on without the women. But a woman commander! They wouldn't hear of it. But, of course, she would be "invisible"—like a woman in a burka.

There is a tradition of women warriors in Afghanistan. For instance, there was one called Malalai. She is a heroine, with schools named after her. Girls are called Malalai. At a famous battle, at Maiwand, in 1880, the English General G. R. S. Burrows was winning. The Afghans had been marching all night and were tired. The Afghans say that Malalai, a peasant girl, called the soldiers cowards and walked out in front of them carrying the flag toward the British lines. She was killed, but her death energized the Afghans, and they won the battle.

THE day after we failed to find the commander whose family we visited, he appeared, and took us back to the same area to see some newly established camps. Again, we drove until we had left behind the green, fertile fields and the irrigation systems and the fat, contented animals, and were in a desert place, full of red blowing dust, stones, dry gullies, rocky ridges. The good ground available for refugee camps had been used up. Poor land or desert or mountain areas were all the refugees could find now.

One of the political parties had supplied tents, some of them ragged. They were scattered about in the dust, over the ridges, a few among some sparse desert shrubs. These people had come out of Afghanistan, over the mountains, six weeks earlier. It had been very hot, and twenty babies and small children had died. Some of the tents had low walls of hard mud around them, but most had only a little soil roughly piled up. The tents were floored with bare earth. There was nothing in them except a few cooking pots. Not much food: there was a little flour in bags hanging from the corners of the tents. Flour and salt. "Salt is cheap," said the commander, grim. A lorry came once a day with water—enough to drink, but not enough to wash with. There were latrine pits here and there between the tents. They were about a yard long, two feet deep. They had no covers; there was nothing to use as covers. The sun rapidly dried the deposits, which thereafter blew about with the dust.

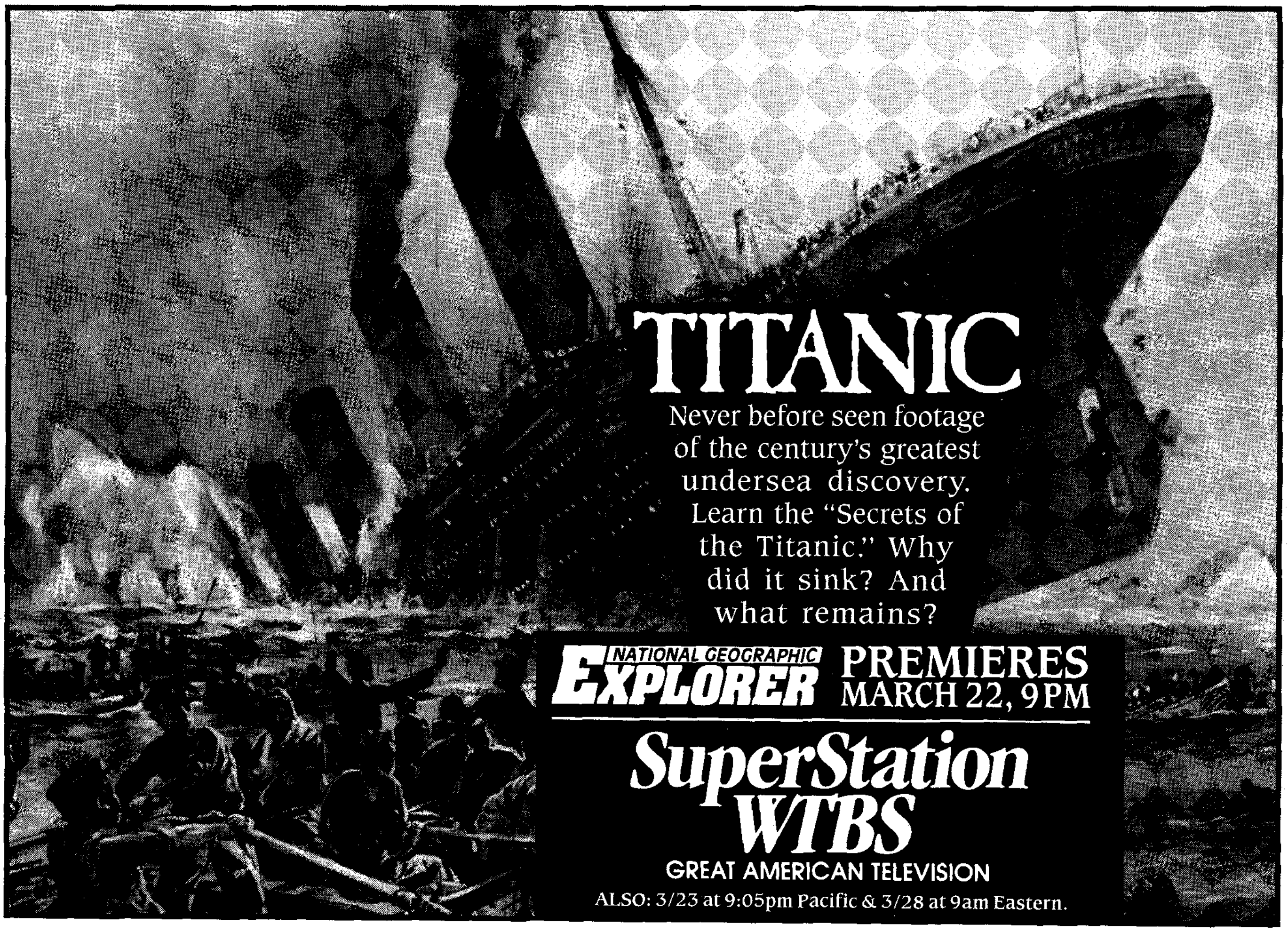
Even in this awful place, the women were kept separate from the men. They and the young girls were crowded in the opening of their tents, watching the men and the boys, who were everywhere, and the very small girls. A girl of about ten loses her freedom and has to join the women; before that, she is as free as she will ever be in her life. When we Western women went toward the women's tents, we were surrounded by a mass of women and children begging for medicines—any medicines. This is partly because the poorer and more ignorant they are the greater is their uncritical respect for Western medicine—they have never heard of the scandals that make us careful about the drugs we take. Partly, they are indeed badly in need of medicines. "And so the Russians bombed our villages and destroyed the crops standing in our fields, and we came over the mountains . . ." And during the weeks of journeying the women of all ages and the children of all ages, with little food or water, fell ill, got diarrhea, broke limbs, suffered from nervous disorders, could not sleep. There were untreated wounds from the bombing. And there were no medicines—none. They begged and begged, and all we had was a few aspirins, which they bore off as if they were some kind of miracle.

Some of them were anxious to tell their stories, believing that if the world knew, help would be forthcoming. As always, every story began, "The Russians bombed our village, and we came over the mountains to this place." A woman said that when the Russians found people in a village they slit the women's stomachs, and killed the children, "for fun." One said that the Russians found a girl baking bread on the edge of a village when they attacked, and they threw her into her own oven and burned her to death. And laughed. Did we know that the Russians piled live people in heaps, poured petrol over them, and set them alight? Did we know that the Russians put people alive into pits, heaped earth over them, and then drove tanks back and forth over them until there wasn't any more movement? The atrocity stories went on and on. "Do you want to hear more?" the commander demanded, fiercely. We said no, thinking of people in the West who had already supped so full of horrors not their own and, alas, might start suffering from "compassion fatigue."

A WOMAN called, let us say, Amina was described to me as typical of a whole range or type of Afghan woman. Educated, or part educated, and free in Afghanistan to wear Western dress and to go unveiled, she got herself additional education or training, perhaps as a nurse or an accountant. Her family, including her father, supported her in her efforts. She married an engineer, highly qualified; and this was a good marriage, for her husband wanted an educated and emancipated wife. Then came the Catastrophe, and she ran away from the Russians across the mountains with her small children, and pregnant with another, who died soon after being born. She is in one of the better refugee camps, with two tiny rooms and a little veranda. Suddenly, she is surrounded by women holding traditional ideas, with whom in Afghanistan she would have had no contact. They recognize her as better educated than they are and having all kinds of dangerous modern notions, which she cannot conceal. The enviousness of the worse off, exacerbated by hard times and by the mullahs who roam the camps to search out wrongdoing and lay down the Law, persecutes this woman. She is now in purdah, and she has to cover her face if she leaves the women's quarters, which is the back room. The slightest infringement of purdah is reported to the mullahs. She is in a party camp, dependent on the mullahs for food, and her children will suffer for her misdemeanors. She is in what amounts to imprisonment, with no way out until the end of the war in Afghanistan.

After many attempts and with great difficulty, we found a woman we could interview and film with no supervision by some self-appointed monitor. What had previously seemed so hard to bring about became simple, as these things do when they happen after long difficulties. It is hard to imagine that anyone could make Tajwar Kakar do anything she did not want to do. She is small but vigorous, decisive, full of confidence. She lives in the usual poor conditions, with seven children—five girls and two boys—whom she supports, working as a teacher. She works very hard.

She was in Kunduz, in northern Afghanistan, and became involved in the resistance immediately after the Communist coup, in 1978. With the aid of male resistance commanders, she established a school to train boys in arms and explosives. She instigated or took part in many demonstrations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against the Communist regime, and when the Russians invaded she was given the task of carrying money, food, and clothes to the families of men in Kabul who were in prison or dead. There she got a job as a teacher and was involved actively in the underground. She was threatened with arrest by Communist Party members. She said, "You people are hypocrites. Your words are beautiful, but your actions are ugly." She was arrested and tortured. She did not give the Russians any information. She was put in solitary, because she was "such a bad example to the other women prisoners." They got nothing out of her. She was released, and she went back to Kunduz. There she continued in the resistance until a man who knew all about her was appointed a KHAD officer in Kunduz. She fled with her family to Kabul with the aid of the Mujahideen.

When we asked her our routine question—"The Russians say they are bringing freedom to the women of Afghanistan, and what do you have to say to that?"—she laughed, and said that before the Catastrophe no women were ever in prison. Now the prisons in Afghanistan are full of women.

It emerged quite casually that there are women in the resistance. "In Herat, there is a lady resistance fighter whose father was a freedom fighter and was killed. Then her brother replaced him as commander and was killed. She took her brother's place, and formed an independent group of woman fighters. They were given arms by the Mujahideen and carry out operations on their own account."

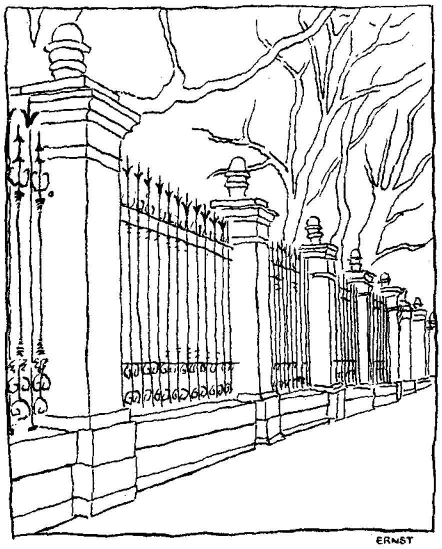
And the woman called Maryam, with three thousand men under her? By now this interest of ours, which had been in the forefront when we first came to Peshawar, had lost its importance—had come to seem frivolous, even typical Western sensationalism, or gimmickry. What did it matter who was fighting?

Nancy Sheils, an American filmmaker, and I decided to fly up to Chitral, in the Hindu Kush, a half-hour flight. It was a little plane, with the usual meltingly beautiful air hostess. By now, I had discovered why in Pakistan the few women in public places are all beautiful. Having banished women's faces to the indoors, so that all they see out-of-doors is men, men, crowds of melancholy men, when they do have an excuse for a woman's face to be visible the Pakistanis naturally make sure it is a pretty face. I suppose this could be described as hypocrisy.

We dodged in and out of mountains. Beneath us were the endless intricacies of terracing, all over the hills and mountainsides. They were like sequins. At the Chitral airport, a man from the Mountain Inn met us in a jeep: no ordinary car can cope with Chitral's roads. We were told we had to report immediately to police headquarters, like everyone else. Chitral is an area of military significance, with the Russians only a few miles away over one range of mountains, and the Chinese over another. Afghanistan's jagged and snow-covered peaks were just there at the end of the road.

In the police station, we hung about and hung about, and I was fascinated by a great wooden board that had on it the lists of all the district officers, starting from the end of the last century. Until 1947, the date of the liberation of the Indian subcontinent from the British, the names were all English, very English—the "Turtons and Burtons" of the British Empire. I noticed the men were stationed up here for only a year. I imagined a young man posted to Chitral's mountainous solitudes to represent the Empire. Easy to picture him, for I have known so many of them: stiff, shy, stubbornly convinced of the worth of the Empire, on the whole honest. He was conscientious, and without a rupee's worth of insight into the people who surrounded him.

We were at last told to present ourselves to the chief of police. He was a heavily built, decent-looking man—in uniform, of course—behind a desk loaded with papers. As lower ranks came in with messages or chits, they saluted, heels together, then relaxed at once and stood very much at ease; evidently his subordinates did not find this man intimidating.



He kept us talking and talking.

Anywhere in the West, two women of indeterminate age wandering around with cameras are as invisible as a woman in a burka in an Islamic country. Who would take a second look? Here we were a challenge, or an offense, to every eye, and we puzzled this policeman.

He wanted to know if the object of our journey was to visit the Kalash Kafirs, which is the great tourist attraction of these parts: an ancient tribe. All the books I have read about this area describe something like Merrie England as it actually must have been. A lot of song and dance, certainly—very picturesque—but filthy, smelly, and generally unappetizing.

Yes, yes, we said, we did want to see the Kalash Kafir tribe, but not on this visit—perhaps on another visit. We were abashed by the differences of perspective thus displayed, for we belong to that minority of the world's population which can say, "Oh, yes, do let's go back to Pakistan! It's so beautiful, and we didn't see . . ."

The chat continued. We asked if there was skiing in the winter.

He said that Chitral in winter was awful, and he seemed ground into gloom at the thought of it.

I asked if he would be more pleased to see us in the winter, and he did smile. Then we were taken off to another office, where we were issued passes for two days.

There are places so beautiful they freeze your senses. Chitral is one. It is built low between mountains that tower and loom. In some places, white peaks mingle with white clouds. Pretty mountain streams dash about everywhere. But even in September the sun does not present itself before about eight in the morning, and departs at four-thirty. What can this place be like in winter? Long, long hours of night, hours of gloomy half daylight, with short, sad moments when the sun can reach down to lay warm fingers on the little town. We could see why the police chief dreaded the winter.

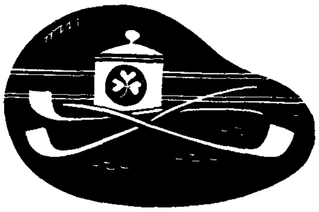
When we got to the hotel, the extent of its gardens quickly revealed itself. They are large, and have all the same plants and shrubs that would be in a hotel garden in Zimbabwe. This hotel, however, was absolutely unlike the country hotels of, let's say, the mountains in the Vumba, which are all drinking hotels. The Mountain Inn was put up in the sixties—a relaxed, graceful two-story building, with wide verandas. Its lack of pretensions is indicated by this exchange:

"Can we have some soda water, please, with lemon?"

Manager: "We don't have soda water. This isn't Peshawar, you know."

There was Coca-Cola, 7Up, and then more Coca-Cola.

That evening, a communal meal had been set out on the veranda. It was a dim scene. For some reason I still haven't grasped, two evenings a week the hotel's lights don't work, and there were candles. At supper were a Swedish freelance photographer, a Dutch woman working in a hospital for Afghan women and children in Peshawar, and her husband, who was in some sort of construction work in Chitral. The couple had their small child with them. The meal over, there was nothing to do but go to bed. Neither Nancy nor I ever go to bed before one or two, but here we had obediently tucked ourselves up by ten o'clock. On the veranda, various Pakistanis (male) sat chatting with the hotel owner, a plump young man of—it goes without saying—great charm. I am sure that during the long winter this hotel, which does not close, is the center of local (male) society.



Chitral was on an arm of the old Silk Road. The word "silk" feeds a tinge of glamour or luxury into the image, but the road was never more than a stony track running along the sides of mountains with a plunge down to the river beneath. The caravan beasts must have been strung out one at a time. In the Shahi Bazaar, the main street, you go back several hundred years. It is a rough, steep lane, lined with the usual booths of mud, or mud and straw, the roofs piled with mud. They sell everything, as they always have, but now some of the goods are plastic. The whole place is crammed with Mujahideen wandering about, buying food for their families in the refugee camps, drinking tea in minute teahouses.

Nancy and I decided to take a jeep up the road to Garam Chasma, which means Warm Springs. This takes two hours, not because of the distance but because of the road, which is terrible. Our driver was a member of the police force—an amiable and helpful fellow. He had an assistant—a Nuristani urchin. Sometimes we stopped to give a Mujahid a lift. The landscape was stunningly, awesomely beautiful. The road runs anywhere it can fit itself along the mountains. The river has in it boulders the size of houses.

After about half an hour's drive, we saw a lot of white tents all over a hillside. This was a Mujahideen camp. There were hundreds of men on that hill. We stopped, and the driver came with us, to look after us. But there was no need to be worried. The week after I left Pakistan, I saw a film of the Mujahideen that made them look like crazed, drug-ridden savages. (It must be very tempting for TV or other journalists to emphasize the more self-dramatizing aspects of the Mujahideen.) If a film of this camp were shown on TV, the impression would be of friendly, well-mannered men in a well-ordered camp. From their point of view, it must have been hard to be suddenly faced with two unveiled infidel women, and, in any case, their camp being on the main road, journalists appeared far too often. They behaved with impeccable courtesy. In one tent, men were sleeping; in another, men sat around talking. One was writing a letter home to his family. Others were reading books and newspapers—one in English. A Mujahid sat out in the space between the tents cooking a meal of vegetables fried in dough with some kind of sauce—it was certainly not going to be a lavish meal. As we left the tents, there was laughter and joking—at our expense. They were mimicking our "*Tashakur, tashakur*" ("Thank you, thank you") in high female voices. This could have been raucous or hostile, but it was quite good-natured.

We drove on up the pass. At Garam Chasma, the driver put us in a little orchard and brought us green tea. Just beyond the orchard, men were up on the brick wall of a new building, working, with a lot of laughter and jokes. The wall looked flimsy, but anything human would seem slight and unimportant among these mountains. There were hundreds of horses in green meadows. They all looked fat: it was the end of summer. During the hours we were there, Mujahideen took the horses in groups down to the river to drink.

We arrived as Mujahideen were preparing to go off into the mountains

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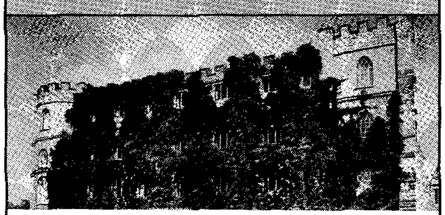

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to fight. Destination: Panjshir. It would take them some days to get there. They walk almost continuously, stopping four hours in the twenty-four to eat bread, drink green tea, and sleep a little. They go in with supplies of their bread—the thick, flat *nan* of the region. When they at last reach their hideouts, their sandalled feet are swollen to the knees, and they have to rest.

Late afternoon. September sunlight lit the green meadow high above the village where the men, hundreds of them, went about their business of loading their glossy horses. They had their blankets slung over their shoulders with their beloved Kalashnikovs. While this was going on, I was sitting in the jeep by myself in the main street of the village, just opposite a little teahouse crowded with Mujahideen taking a last meal before their journey. They kept passing and passing the jeep, in ones or twos or groups, and they would stop. A white female in a jeep? I must be a doctor. They asked for medicine, over and over again. They were going in to fight without medicines, without a doctor. I had to say no, no, I was sorry, I had none. They asked simply and directly, and took the refusal like men used to being stoically disappointed. This "street" was really a lane of hard, rutted mud between mud-and-straw buildings. Again, this could have been hundreds of years ago, except for the weapons the men were carrying.

Donkeys came past, too, strings of them—little donkeys stepping nimbly among the ruts and the stones. They were well fed, but they had sores, all of them, from badly fitting girths and straps. By the end of this winter, the donkeys would not be looking like this, and all these fat horses—well, many of them—would be dead. There is not enough food.

The lines of men with their horses went off up the pass and disappeared into the mountains.

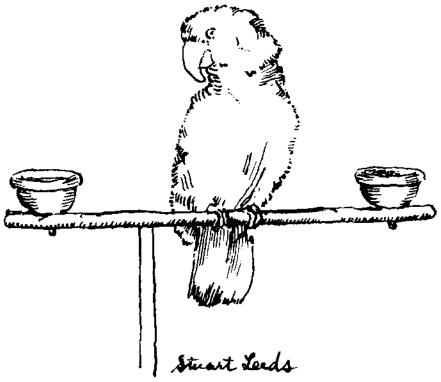
WE went back to Chitral. If Chitral had made Peshawar seem like a metropolis, now Chitral, beside Garam Chasma, was civilization itself. But we were thinking of the fighters moving up into the mountains in the night. It would be very dark—there was no moon. It would be silent, too, with perhaps only the sound of hooves on stones and the night birds. We had been told—had read—of careless, noisy Mujahideen attracting the attention of the enemy, but this lot had seemed sober and alert and responsible.

We went to bed soon after the last call to prayer. The group of men on the veranda talked quietly, sleepily. It really did seem as if all Chitral were asleep, but perhaps—we hoped—inside the houses there was fun going on, conversations, perhaps between men and women. There might even be a party or two. But they were all supposed to get up at five, so this was probably their bedtime. I thought of the police chief's complaint about the dreary winters. Had it meant that these autumn evenings in Chitral were feasts of pleasure?

Perhaps next time we visited Chitral everything would be different. The enterprising manager is building a tearoom, for there is no tearoom in Chitral for Western visitors. It will look over roofs and gardens and across the river to the mountains, which seem to say so loudly, "This, too, shall pass." Through this valley came the armies of Alexander the Great, and the Mogols. Now the Russians are just behind that range there, biding their time.

The manager had said, "Perhaps next summer the Americans will come back, and then we'll all get rich," and he laughed. He shares the Europeans' affectionate impatience with the Americans for letting themselves be bothered by a few bombs. He said, "But why, when people are killing each other in their own cities all the time?"

We were booked on the second flight out of Chitral that morning. This is a simple statement of something achieved with difficulty and much queuing. The airline offices in Chitral are a dingy little room whose veranda, a few feet square, has a ticket window overlooking it and a rushing stream that appears out of one wall and disappears under another; to get inside the room, you need to be nimble, stepping from bank to bank. Frustrated crowds press against that window whenever the office is open. We women, spied in the mass of men, were at once called inside, where we could not be seen by them. We were given tickets on that overfull plane. The planes are always overfull. To fly out of Chitral is a tricky bit of navigation between the mountains, and at the slightest hint of bad weather there are no flights at all. There is always a backlog of hopeful passengers crowding around that window. We were desperate to get out of Chitral. Suppose the bad weather closed in while we were there. Why, we might have to spend the winter there! The only other way in—but not in winter—is a ten-hour road journey, picturesque but so appalling that people who have made it say, "Well, it is certainly something you should do. Once." Provisions to last a whole winter have to be brought up in autumn. The road is closed with the first snows, and the aircraft may or may not fly.

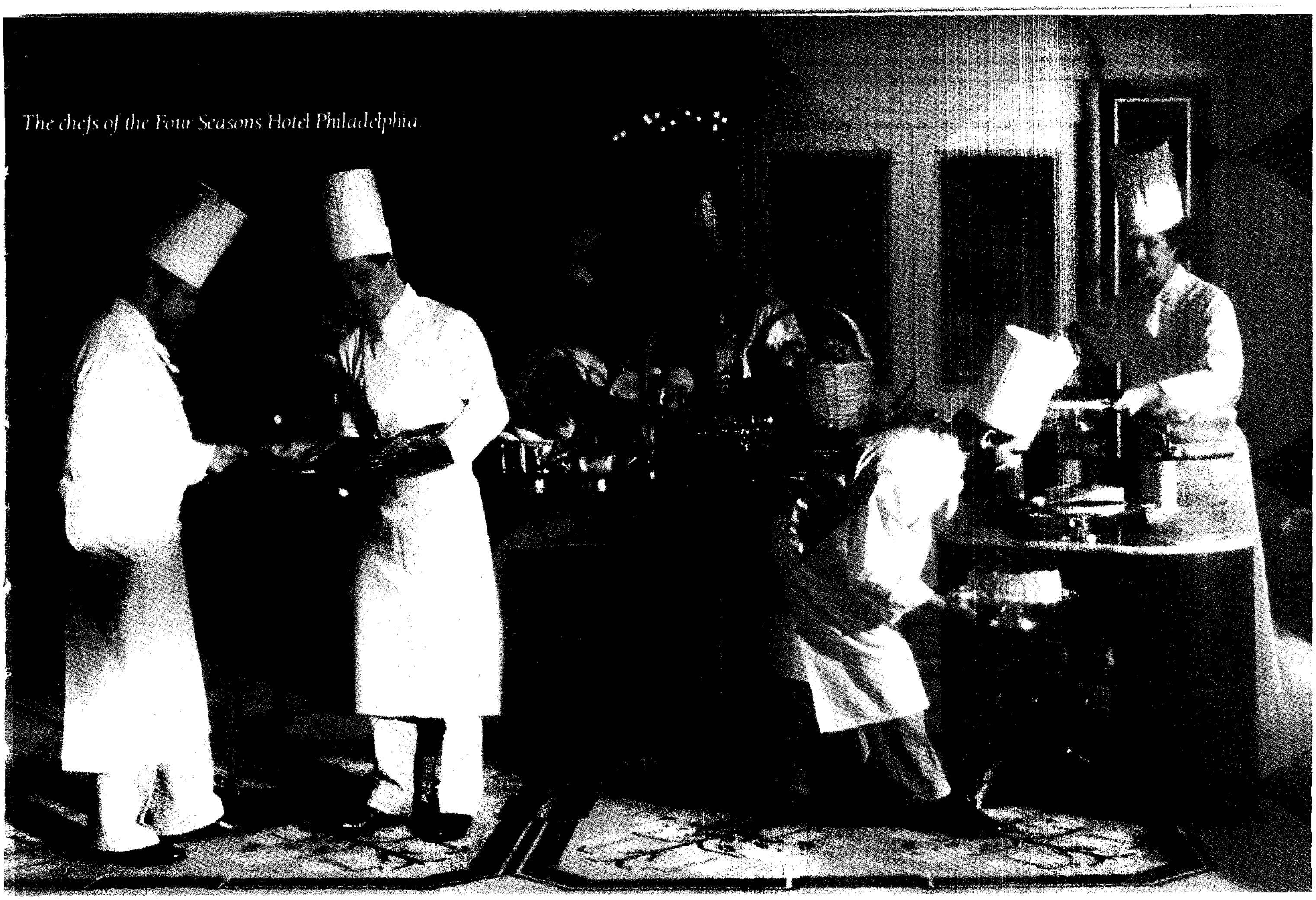


When we goat-footed our way out of that office across the little mountain stream, a Mujahid asked, "How did you get into the office when we can't?"

"Ah, but you see," Nancy replied, with simple dignity, "we are women."

At the airport, we said goodbye to the jeep driver and his urchin Nuristani assistant with genuine sadness. "You are a marvellous driver," I said sincerely, thinking of how he had eased that jeep for hours and hours over the awful road. At this moment, the jeep began to run backward—he had forgotten to put the brake on. People leapt laughing out of the way, the jeep was secured, and we were delivered into the airport building. Then a man in the ordinary Pakistani dress that looks like pajamas asked to see our passports. Nancy suddenly became a true Daughter of the American Revolution and said haughtily that she was not in the habit of showing her passport to just anybody who asked. To back her up, I said he wasn't wearing any identity disk. The poor fellow was astounded; he was, of course, from the police station, making sure that we were actually leaving. He fumbled in a pocket and brought out a photograph on a document that said he was "Security." It was folded in a bit of old paper. At this we handed over our passports. Now we were sad to leave Chitral.

There, because it is the end of the earth, a little mountain airport, extremes meet. A man brought individual orders of tea on a tray to where we sat. Then Nancy and I were banished



The chefs of the Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia

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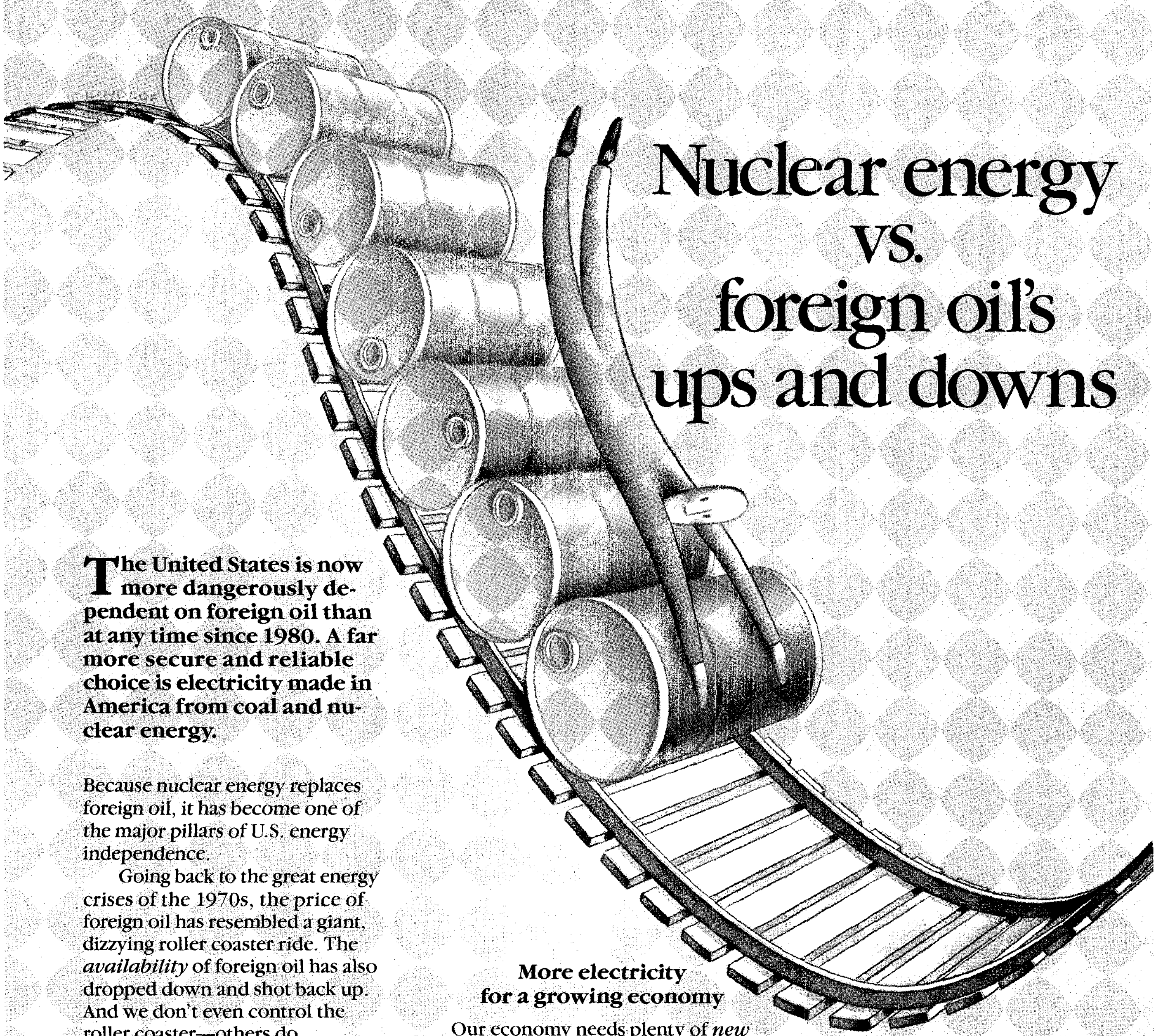

Nuclear energy vs. foreign oil's ups and downs

The United States is now more dangerously dependent on foreign oil than at any time since 1980. A far more secure and reliable choice is electricity made in America from coal and nuclear energy.

Because nuclear energy replaces foreign oil, it has become one of the major pillars of U.S. energy independence.

Going back to the great energy crises of the 1970s, the price of foreign oil has resembled a giant, dizzying roller coaster ride. The *availability* of foreign oil has also dropped down and shot back up. And we don't even control the roller coaster—others do.

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Clearly, the more energy we use in the form of electricity from coal and nuclear energy, the less oil we have to import.

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Our economy needs plenty of *new* electrical energy to keep on growing. Almost all of that new energy is coming from coal and nuclear electric plants.

The truth is that nuclear energy is an everyday fact of life in the U.S. It's been generating electricity here for nearly 30 years. Throughout the country are more than 100 nuclear plants, and they are our second largest source of electric power. As our economy grows, we'll need more of those plants to avoid even more dependence on foreign oil.

Safe energy for a secure future

Most important, nuclear energy is a safe, clean way to generate electricity. U.S. nuclear plants have a whole series of multiple backup safety systems to prevent accidents. Plus superthick containment buildings designed to protect the public even if something goes wrong. (It's a "Safety in Depth" system.)

The simple fact is this: America's energy independence depends in part on America's nuclear energy.

For more information, write the U.S. Committee for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 1537 (RC23), Ridgely, MD 21681. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Information about energy
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into purdah through Immigration. They made Nancy take every bit of her camera equipment apart—naturally enough. As for me, I had to take a Velcro'd cast off my wrist, which was broken, in case drugs, or perhaps even a bomb, might be hidden underneath it. They are (of course) dazzlingly pretty girls who do this work. They were laughing, embarrassed but determined, as they prodded various bits of my anatomy. Purdah in the Chitral airport is a little room for women and small children. It was full. In purdah, women gaze out of windows and keep opening doors quickly a little way to see what may be happening on the other side; it is a place where you listen and watch for the big events going on outside the room you are imprisoned in.

There was not a seat empty on the plane. They escorted off a young man—tall, long-haired, vintage sixties, American—who was stoned and silly, and then they brought him back on. A security man with a gun rode in front with the pilot all the way. We wondered if there had been a bomb scare, or some airport incident that we had not read about: we had not been reading any newspapers in Chitral.

WE descended into the dust haze of Peshawar. In our hotel, the fans revolved in the thick air. My time was running out. Just before I returned to Europe, I met a professor who once taught in Kabul University and now works in Peshawar University. He said, "I hear you've been meeting the Mujahideen. Great characters, yes, I know. But I tell you I would a thousand times rather be a Mujahid than one of their women. A Mujahid has to suffer great hardship—he may have to live for months on very little food, he has no warm clothes. Many of them get killed. But all that is better than being an Afghan woman in one of these terrible camps. We are mountain people and desert people, we are used to space—no one is cramped for space in Afghanistan, in the towns or out of them. The women had a good life before the Catastrophe. Very few were veiled—women were not forced to be veiled—and the power of the mullahs was nothing compared with what it is now. It is a tragedy of this war that the mullahs have achieved so much influence. The Afghans are not a fanatical people by nature, though when you hear them talk about the Jihad you may think they are. It is this war that has intensified what was only an aspect of their character."

The professor said, "The women have all stopped singing. Once, before the Catastrophe, what you heard in the villages was women singing. Now they are cooped up like animals in their camps, with no end in sight to their war, with their children. Their men are fighting—they come and visit them between battles, sometimes with months between visits. The women are depressed, as I read that your women are sometimes, and live on sedatives when they are lucky enough to get any. They are forced to go into purdah and wear the veil. They cannot leave the camps—they are policed by the mullahs and by the Pakistani camp authorities. No, I am not criticizing the Pakistanis—without them we would all be dead; there would be no Afghans left."

Then he talked about the killing of the Afghan intellectuals by the Russians. "A whole generation of poets, playwrights, writers, intellectuals has vanished into their prisons, and has not been heard of since," he said. "There was a literary movement developing in Afghanistan, something quite new and very promising. All these people have simply been wiped out. Why has the world not protested? Has this ever happened before in our time—that a whole generation of intellectuals has simply been destroyed with not one word of protest from anyone? The list of their names would fill that wall there from top to bottom. All tortured and murdered, and not a whisper of protest."

EACH day I am away from Pakistan, I find myself admiring it more. In Peshawar, people are cynical about Pakistan's motives—they say that aid and arms for the refugees are stolen, that the authorities can be bribed, that the very existence of the refugee camps has boosted the economy. All that may be true, but I came back to London from Pakistan to news that workers who had once been accepted into Europe because it suited us were being sent back home. And this was happening not only in Europe: Saudi Arabia is sending back foreign workers, too; we met some in Peshawar. What a song and dance we make about the few refugees we do take in, the rich countries of Europe! But General Zia has remained imperturbable: he will not return the refugees to the Russians.

—Doris Lessing

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BOOKS

Poets' Prose

“TO see, to realize with a prodigious leap” was for Marianne Moore the aesthetic act: “looking . . . with that fixed, abstracted lizardlike expression of the eye which is characteristic of all accurate observers.” (The quotation comes from an uncollected poem, “Old Tiger.”) The immobile eye of the lizard is not the eye of Keats' chameleon poet, forever changing color with surroundings, defining self by context. Moore prized the observer who resists being changed; her old tiger knows “that it is not necessary to live in order to be alive.” That haughty truth, pronounced not without bitterness, might be said to lie behind Moore's prose, as behind her quiet life. (I do not think it lies behind her poetry, where, especially in her early years, she lives and is alive at once.) The prose—done to order, most of it, as reviewing—is not without personal engagement, but it is often without personal anguish; it is nonetheless a prose of acute observation, humor, and considerable intellectual wryness.

“Predilections” (1955), an early collection of a few of Moore's more substantial essays, has now been replaced by the invaluable “Complete Prose” (Viking; $24.95), edited by Patricia C. Willis, curator of the Moore Collection in the Rosenbach Museum & Library, in Philadelphia. The new collection enables us to see how early Moore strikes her most characteristic prose note—that of assertive negatives. At twenty-eight, she uses them in writing of Samuel Butler:

> [His] unwillingness to assume the official character of “scrutineer” has not impaired his serviceability. One does not love a man the less for his unwillingness to say, “I have examined the credentials of other people; I have plucked masks from hypocrites' faces; I have stood nearby to see that no undeserving person got a crumb.”

Fifteen years later, in 1931, she is still using them, this time in confronting the popular use and abuse of T. S. Eliot, whom she revered.

> *Marina* is not for those who read inquisitively, as a compliment to the author, or to find material for the lecture platform. Apocalyptic declaration is uncompliant to parody. If charged by chameleon logic and unstudious didacticism with creating a vogue for torment, Mr. Eliot can afford not to be incommoded.

In this passage, Moore mocks various vices: reading for gossip about the writer's private life; reading for fashion; reading for the purpose of opining in public; reading to parody a work; reading to make a superficial judgment; reading to rebuke an author. What prompted Moore's inventory of critical vices was the public reception of “The Waste Land.” (“Eliot was abused,” Robert Lowell wrote, “as no other man, either American or British.”) Moore will not say that Eliot can afford, given his poetic power, to remain tranquil in the face of such a reception—no, he can afford not to be incommoded. To be incommoded would betray the vice of anxiety about public opinion; virtue, for Moore, consists in not acquiescing in vice. It is virtuous *not* to parody, *not* to read in the wrong ways, *not* to leap to a shallow, didactic stance. Moore's characteristic phrasing of virtue—not in positive terms but in terms of the vice it resists—suggests that vice is always the more natural path for any of us to take. In this, she is firmly within the American Calvinist vein. (She grew up, after all, in a rectory, and her brother was a clergyman. One might even speculate on the ways in which the absence of ordination for women led to the heterodox authority of voice in both Moore and Emily Dickinson.)

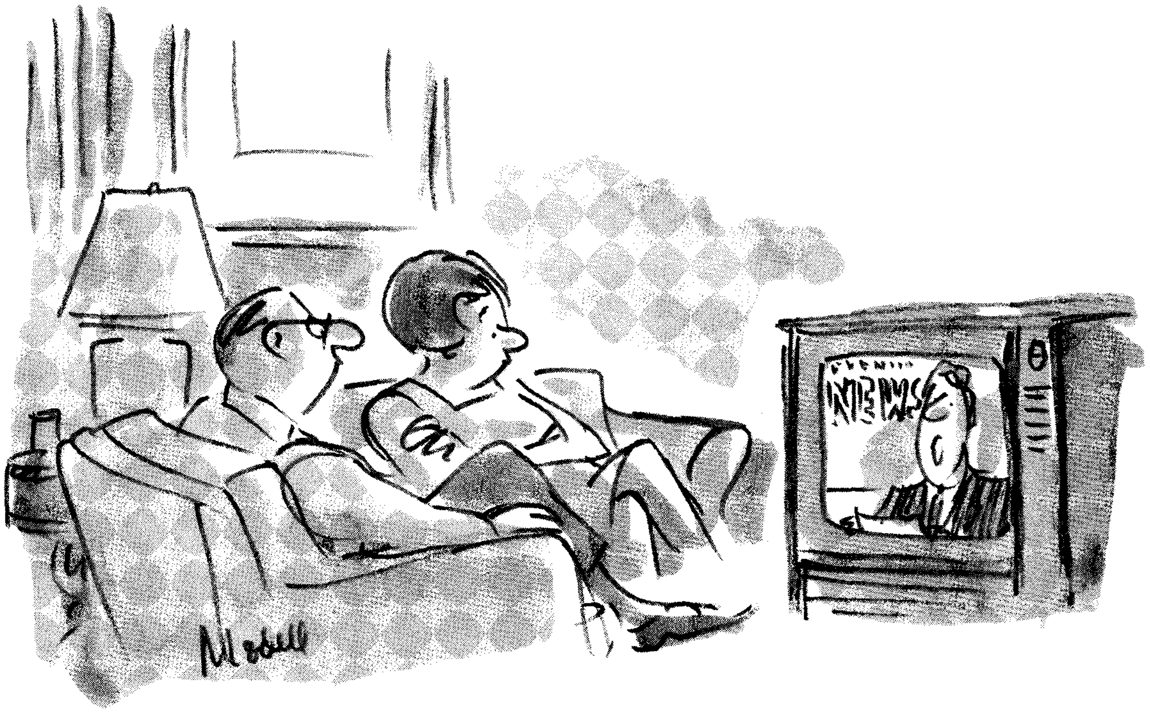
The studied impersonality of Moore's critical writing—an impersonality bordering always on the aphoristic, the homiletic, and the gnomic—betrays a wish that opinion remove itself as far as possible from the merely personal, the whimsical, the fanciful, even the conversational. While Conrad Aiken, for instance, was being flexible, sinuous, and graceful in his excellent criticism, Moore, in a way no less excellent but perhaps less generally appealing, was writing like this:

> The vulgarity of poetry is an insisting upon the subsidiary as major; whereas the interior thing is its glory. Sensibility imposes silence which the imagination transmutes into eloquence and then, for the spiritual mariner, however northern, stranded, or chilled, there is society in solitude.

These are the accents of Protestant belief, phrased in the weighted clauses of Johnsonian estimation, illuminated by an echo from Marvell: “Society is all but rude / To this delicious solitude.” Passion is sequestered in the word “glory,” pain is sequestered in the Arctic loneliness of the metaphorical mariner. The hasty reader can skim the passage missing both the passion and the pain.

Moore's theory of criticism is a scientific one. She believes with all her heart—and all her mind—in the possibility of a literary description comparable in accuracy to botanical or anatomical description (which she had herself practiced in her courses in biology at Bryn Mawr). In every author she praises, she praises truthfulness and fineness in description. She never doubts for a moment—her style will not permit it—the accuracy of her own delineations. If she says of Stevens (her favorite poet, judging from these pages) that he combines “spectacularly quiet verbal harmonies . . . with a modestly precise authoritativeness,” she is sure we will notice, in her illustrative quotation, the quietness, the harmony, the spectacular deftness, the precision, the modesty, and the authority. No room is left for disagreement; it is assumed that any competent witness will find in Stevens exactly the qualities she has named. Like Johnson and Eliot, she is in criticism perfectly authoritative, not so much out of arrogance as out of a conviction of an aesthetic and moral community. Anyone who loves James, she is certain, will have noticed (as she has) his “ascetic strain,” his “terrible truthfulness,” his “warmth,” his “formidable paraphernalia,” his “instinct to amass and reiterate,” and the many other qualities she remarks on in her splendid essay “Henry James as a Characteristic American,” which, like her essays on Stevens, reveals an almost unmixed delight.

Though she was a conscientious admirer of the presence of moral earnestness in any book she reviewed, only rarely could Moore admire an author's language. However, the writings of James, Frost, Pound, Stevens, Eliot, Williams, and H.D. all stirred her to



"Now, here's a pretty how-d'ye-do just in."

enthusiasm, and in her almost self-forgetful praise of these compatriots she shows no professional envy. If she singles out in their work the quality most striven after in her own poetry—an idiosyncratic gift for description—rather than ways in which they differ from her practice, her emphasis no doubt arises from an intimate knowledge of the difficulties of exact rendition.

This is a book to be browsed in, not to be read through. My own favorite passage is the opening of a review of Stevens' "Ideas of Order":

> Poetry is an unintelligible unmistakable vernacular like the language of the animals—a system of communication whereby a fox with a turkey too heavy for it to carry, reappears shortly with another fox to share the booty.

This is as far as one can come from expository prose in the pedagogical sense. It reveals Moore writing to please precisely herself and the ghost of La Fontaine (and perhaps Stevens) rather than the readers of Eliot's *Criterion*, in which the review appeared. What she says of poetry is brilliantly true, both with respect to its excess in stratagem and with respect to the special language in which poetry is composed: not, whatever the uninstructed may think, "English" but a separate language, which we might call "Poetic"—a language with its own codes of signification drawn from poetic practice since the dawn of time.

Because Moore preferred whenever possible to write appreciatively, her sardonic powers are kept in restraint here, but the alert reader will find sly rebukes to presuming authors, and, in her review of the inept but complacent biography of Charlotte Brontë by E. F. Benson, a description so full of propriety while supremely disdainful that—unexcerptable in its seamless scorn—it has to be read in full. The subversiveness of Moore's style—its perfect composure maintained over a lurking minefield of original perceptions—is what was relished by her contemporaries and by younger poets. Lowell once said of Williams and Moore:

> Their kind of protest and queerness has hardly been repeated. They're wonderful writers. You won't see anyone as strange as Marianne Moore again, not for a long while. Conservative and Jamesian as she is, it was terrible, private, and strange revolutionary poetry.

It is easy to forget, in reading these hundreds of pieces with the security of hindsight, how much Moore was helping to make new works known, works not easy to absorb at first reading. It must have been a daunting thing to be one of the first writers on Yeats' "The Wild Swans at Coole," Pound's "A Draft of XXX Cantos," Stevens' "Harmonium," Williams' "Kora in Hell." These works are still being interpreted and investigated; Moore's serene critical intelligence assumed from the first that they were intelligible, beautiful, and worthy not only of interest and pondered description but also, when necessary, of reproach. ("Dr. Williams' wisdom . . . is not absolute and he is sometimes petulant.")

There are distressing defects in this presentation of Moore's prose. There is no list of books reviewed, with dates. There is no detailed table of contents—an omission to be regretted, since a table listing the title of each essay would have usefully exhibited Moore's insouciance: "Well Moused, Lion" prefaces a review of Stevens, "Perspicuous Opacity" introduces a review of Stein, "Ichor of Imagination" a review of Cocteau, "Histrionic Seclusion" a review of George Moore. But more regrettable, in a book devoted to one of the most careful and fastidious of writers, is the dismaying absence of proofreading. (I assume the errors are attributable to proofreaders, and not to Moore.) Moore is made to write "anomolous," "felicitious," "magnimity," "contaminents," "Praxitiles," and other barbarisms. Her quotations from "La Cenerentola" are rendered illiterate, and her French is equally questionable, revealing spellings like "laiser" and "Société Ethnographie." In a passion of misplaced correctness, someone has changed Lewis Carroll's "reeling and writhing" to "reeling and writing." Lines from Wallace Stevens made the proofreader throw up his hands. In her charming poem defending America against Anglophiles (called, with light malice, "England"), Moore mocked those who thought America was a land "grassless, linksless, languageless," a place "where there are no proofreaders." This carelessly prepared volume would vindicate the Anglophiles.

Nonetheless, this collection does give us our first convenient access to the prose of an American original. The difficulties of Moore's life—her partial orphaning by her father's insanity, her slender means, her spinsterhood in a country where the unmarried woman was thought neurotic or pitiable, her isolation in uniqueness —are masked in these essays, but suffering can occasionally be sensed beneath the expression of its characteristic virtue, fortitude. One passage is unwontedly eloquent, and rises to the passion of religious oratory while keeping its distance from the predictability of conventional religious utterance:

> For mortal rage and immortal injury, are there not medicines? Job and Hamlet insisted that we dare not let ourselves be snared into hating hatefulness; to do this would be to take our own lives. . . .
>
> Those who have seemed to know most about eternity feel that this side of eternity is a small part of life. We are told, if we do wrong that grace may abound, it does not abound. We need not be told that life is never going to be free from trouble and that there are no substitutes for the dead; but it is a fact as well as a mystery that weakness is power, that handicap is proficiency, that the scar is a credential, that indignation is no adversary for gratitude, or heroism for joy. There are medicines.

Moore rarely let herself write so openly in her own voice. Increasingly, her essays became a collage of quotations from the author under review. Her taste was not impeccable (see her essay on Edith Sitwell); and one is sorry to see a decline in the prose of her later years, when she could write the review beginning "Babette Deutsch, a teacher and a very special one as shown in her *Poetry Handbook*, is a craftsman, originator and translator"—a dull and nerveless sentence unimaginable in Moore's early work.

At one point, Moore refers to her "timid self," and at another she says, "I was diffident when I was sixteen, intimidated by sleigh rides, barn dances, and such parties. . . . I was over-anxious. . . . I'd be uncertain whether I'd pass this or that subject." And yet she adds immediately, "When I was sixteen, I felt as old and decisive as when I was fifty or sixty." A mixture of the anxious and the decisive gives Moore's thinking its peculiar charm. She praised in R. P. Blackmur his "tonic unaggressive instinctive unswerving uncompromise of exactitude," and the discovery that the unaggressive could accompany the unswerving led to her aesthetic of the unclimactic:

> The unaccented rhymed syllable has an attraction for me as it had for Longfellow, Whittier, and others; and as a phase of unaccent, I tend to like a poem which instead of culminating in a crescendo, merely comes to a close.

Though Moore did not believe herself to lack belief in a providential apocalyptic pattern, her preference for a non-apocalyptic, unclimactic shape in art has made her a guide for many contemporary poets. Those who want to know more fully the mind that made the poetry, and to see the distinctive sentence patterns of the poems reflected in their prose cousins, will welcome this collection of sixty-one years—sixty-one ardent years—of Moore's work.

BESIDES his incomparable poetry, William Butler Yeats wrote an enormous amount of splendid prose and thousands of letters. Even now, however, the prose of Yeats needs further editing and collecting, and the 1954 "Letters of W. B. Yeats," a selection edited by Allan Wade, has gone out of print. But a "Collected Letters" in twelve or more volumes is beginning to be issued under the general supervision of John Kelly, a Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, and the first of these volumes—with some three hundred and fifty letters, taking Yeats *to the age of thirty*—*has* recently appeared, edited by Mr. Kelly and Eric Domville, of the University of Toronto (Oxford; $29.95). The jacket announces that almost seven thousand letters have come to light since Yeats' death, and this volume whets the appetite for the rest. Mr. Kelly's luxurious fullness of annotation enables even a neophyte to line up the dramatis personae by class, religion, marital status, political affiliation, and geographical origin—information required for understanding the causes, quarrels, factions, debates, and intrigues that played so large a part in Yeats' turbulent life. Yeats is now a world author, and these notes make him available to the world.

Mr. Kelly has taken the bold step of leaving Yeats' letters alone. Yeats was dyslexic, and he had terrible eyesight; he reversed letters in a recognizably dyslexic way, and was capable of spelling the same word three ways in three lines ("sepecial," "spicial," "special"). Perhaps this book will help teachers of English to keep in mind the distinction between intelligence and

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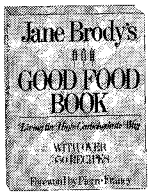
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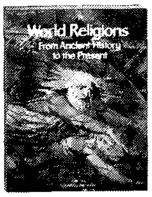
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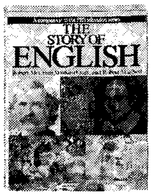
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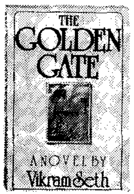
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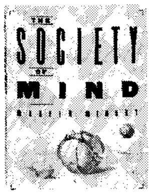
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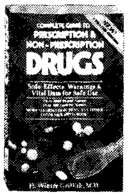

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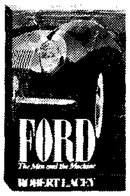
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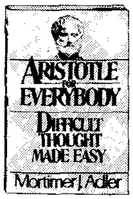
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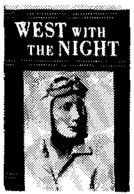
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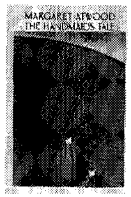
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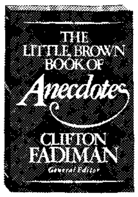
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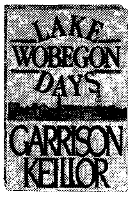
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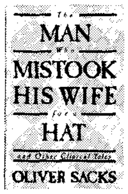
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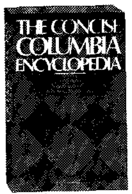
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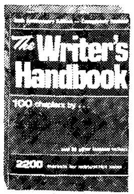
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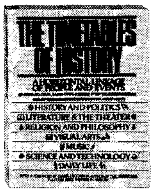
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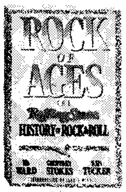
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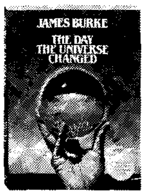
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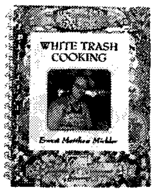
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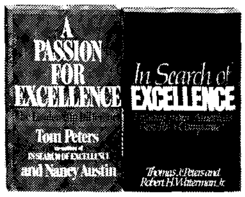
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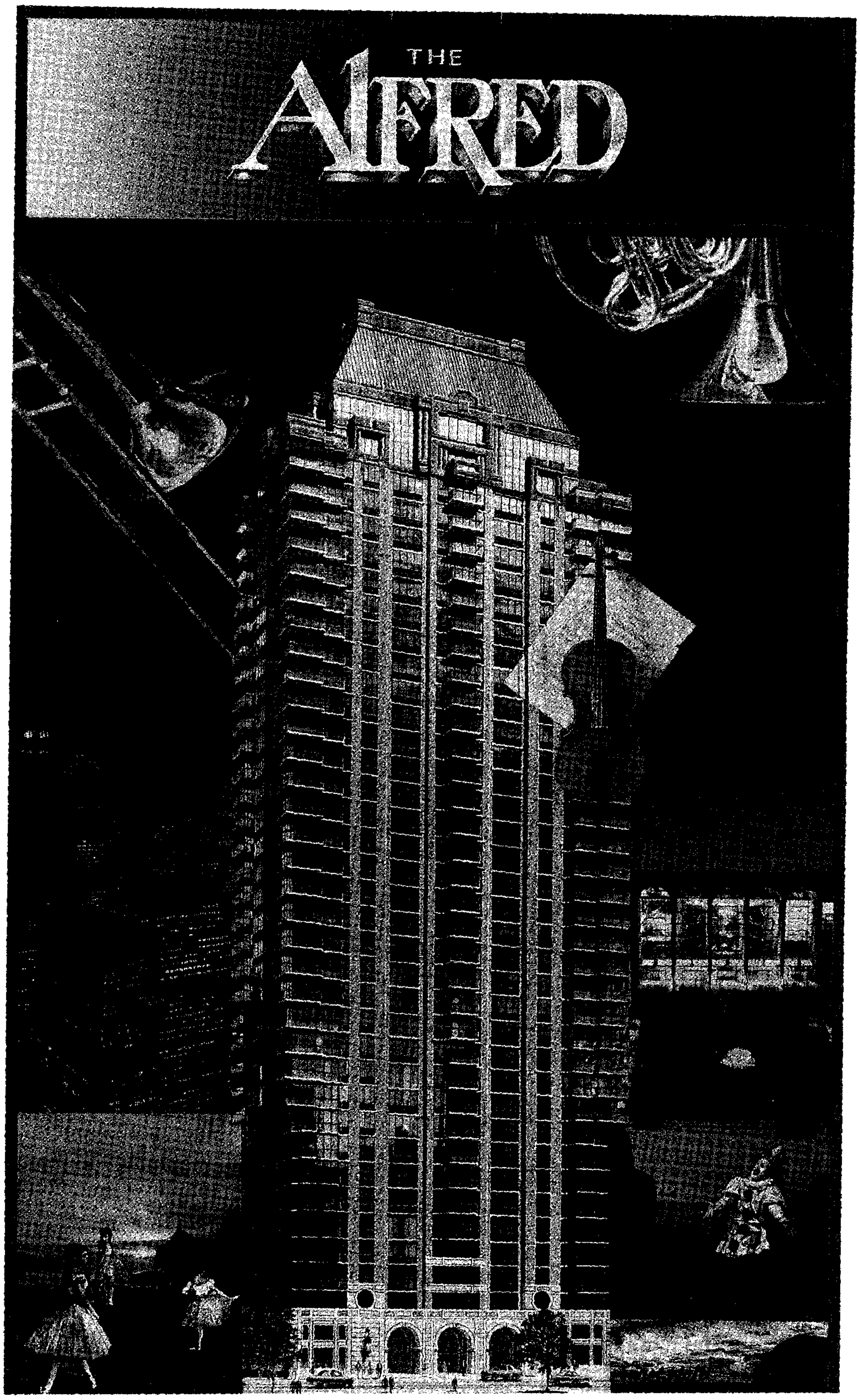

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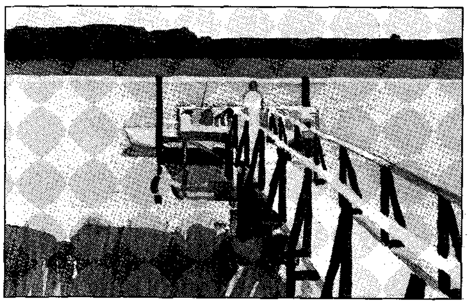

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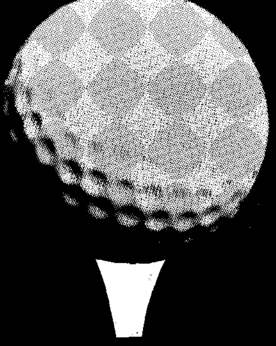

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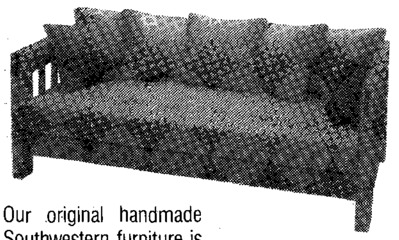

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the ability to spell. We will eventually need a "Selected Letters" in which normal spelling is restored, if only so that those making their acquaintance with genius for the first time will not wince at sentences like this: "Such a book would I beleive attract attention . . . for up to this their has not been a single fragment of writing on Blake by anyone [who understands] his smaller mystial poems. . . ." Nonetheless, Mr. Kelly is right to print Yeats' letters as they stand, particularly since the ability to read Yeats' sketchy handwriting takes years to acquire, making the manuscripts almost inaccessible to scholars.

Because Mr. Kelly includes letters to newspapers and magazines as well as private letters, we can see that Yeats has two letter-writing styles—the one superbly self-possessed and concise, the other more unbuttoned, frequently distracted, and sometimes desperate. His twenties were for Yeats shaky, poverty-haunted, worried, and uncertain years—years of hackwork done for money. (Yeats had no university degree, since he had not done well enough in high school to pass university-entrance requirements, a humiliation for one whose family had traditionally gone to Trinity.) He collected Irish fairy and folk tales, he made a selection of William Carleton's stories, he copied out the black-letter text of Caxton's "Aesop," he edited and interpreted (with Edwin Ellis) the poems of William Blake. At the same time, he was writing the poems (notably "The Wanderings of Oisin") and the plays (notably "The Countess Kathleen," "The Land of Heart's Desire," and "The Shadowy Waters") that were the foundation of his fame.

Yeats as a young letter-writer is not Keats or Hopkins. There is rather little in these early letters reflecting the intense inner life of composition, which Yeats as yet scarcely knew how to conduct, still less to describe. But there is already a remarkable coolness of self-judgment. Yeats was always his own sternest critic. His famous verdict on his first book of poems, arrived at when he was correcting the manuscript, bears repeating: "It is not the poetry of insight and knowledge but of longing and complaint—the cry of the heart against necesity. I hope some day to alter that and write poetry of insight and knowledge." The extraordinary capacity for detachment visible in that sentence—written when Yeats was only twenty-two—was what he drew on in all his self-revisions, moral and political as well as aesthetic. The coldness of his intellectual judgment ("Cast a cold eye / On life, on death") combined oddly with his dreaminess of sensibility. His capacity for entering a completely imagined world was very great; he said of "Oisin," "It really was a kind of vision it beset me day and night. . . . The first parts I felt. I saw the second."

Wanting to be able to command his imagination, to summon up at will those states of heightened intensity, Yeats spent a good deal of time investigating magic, trying to induce trances, and reading those authors (Blake, Swedenborg, Böhme) who seemed to describe, classify, and authenticate states of the kind he had experienced. (Later, he experimented with automatic writing as a way to tap reservoirs of the unconscious—to find "metaphors for poetry," as he said in "A Vision.") His pursuit of imaginative states led him into the strange company of occultists, Theosophists, mediums—who seemed perhaps less strange in the late nineteenth century than they do to us now. But even in those years Yeats never lost his shrewd common sense, and he resigned from the Theosophists because they were "turning a good philosophy into a bad religeon." They had wanted Yeats to promise not to criticize them. He reports, in shorthand, "I refused because I looked upon request as undue claim to control right of individual to think as best pleased him."

Yeats' assertion of the right to individual judgment meant, of course, that he could never be a satisfactory adherent of any institution or sect; one sees him in these letters futilely attacking the (routine and ever-present) falsification of reality in any political movement. The language and action of politics, he says, lack "precision and balance of mind . . . the very qualities which make literature possible." The work of an Irish man of letters must be, to his mind, "to fight for moderation, dignity, & the rights of the intellect among [he should perhaps have said "against"] his fellow nationalists." Since moderation, precision, balance of mind, dignity, and the rights of the intellect are not notably respected by sectarian movements of any sort, Yeats was to remain a political example rather than a politician, a man of religious inclination rather than a member of any church. "When I was a child," he recalls at twenty-two, "and used to watch the ants running about in Burnham Beeches I used often to say 'what religion do the ants have?' "

It is a pleasure to watch, in these letters, Yeats' superb irony in the making. A magazine had garbled his verses, printing

The bubbles from the ebbs arose, and slipped
 Poolward dull frogs luxurious in the slow;
Water his flame the grey guide, whispering, dipped.

Yeats' response to this offense was to write to the editor:

DEAR SIR—
I write to correct a mistake. The curious poem in your issue of the 19th inst. was not by me, but by the compositor, who is evidently an imitator of Browning. I congratulate him on the exquisite tact with which he has caught some of the confusion of his master. I take an interest in the matter, having myself a poem of the same name as yet unpublished.

Yours faithfully,
W. B. YEATS

At twenty-two, he was older in irony than many of us ever become.

Frequently, in these young sentences, Yeats articulates images that we associate with verse written sixty years later. He says of the Demon in "Oisin" that it is "the best animal in my whole managery;" in old age, he would write, "Winter and summer till old age began / My circus animals were all on show." He writes when he is twenty-nine that under his stream of verse there lie "rocks & half buried wreckage at the bottom;" in "The Circus Animals' Desertion" he would call that wreckage at the bottom "the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart." The stilts of "High Talk" make their first, literal appearance in a letter he writes at eleven ("I am getting stilts"); when he is twenty-three, they are already metaphor ("To keep happy seems like walking on stilts"). In 1890, he is urging his friend Katharine Tynan to write "a play about the adoration of the magi;" in 1913, he would write his poem about their dissatisfaction as they hope,

 . . . to find once more,
Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied,
The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor.

Into the later passages I have quoted there falls always the note of self-query, self-irony, or self-mockery. Yeats' adult stereoscopic measuring of yearning and futility in the same gaze is nowhere clearer than in his repeti-

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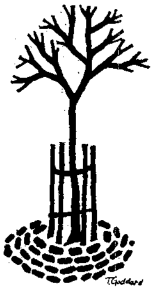
tion in "The Circus Animals' Desertion" of an early letter about Oisin's quests for "infinite feeling, infinite battle, infinite repose." The late verse calls those quests "allegorical dreams, / Vain gaiety, vain battle, vain repose." Did Yeats remember in his seventies the letter written at twenty-three?

The society so concisely outlined in Mr. Kelly's abundant notes and biographical sketches is a ragtag and bobtail of earnest writers, eccentrics, terrorists, drunkards, philanthropists, painters, politicians, clergy, editors, advocates of Gaelic, professors, swindlers, publishers, Cabalists, and others. Through the pages pass Oscar Wilde, Maud Gonne, Helena Blavatsky, Olivia Shakespear, MacGregor Mathers, and—in a walk-on part—Ernest Renan in the British Museum: "I saw Renan wandering about yesterday, looking very like an old fat priest." Wilde, invited to contribute to a magazine, asks if it is a paper meant to improve people: "I said not so he will probably write for it." Yeats shaves off his beard, and Mme. Blavatsky promises him "a bad illness in three months through the loss of all the mesmeric force that collects in a beard." The Irish establish a Commission on Evil Literature; Yeats offends the clergy by reprinting anti-Catholic stories by William Carleton. The quasi-Rosicrucian Order of the Golden Dawn, to which Yeats belonged, descends to internecine strife as MacGregor Mathers sends Aleister Crowley "to seize the Vault of the Adepti by force. This Crowley achieved—wearing a black mask and full highland rig—but a counter-movement, led by WBY, regained the premises." Maud Gonne bears two illegitimate children by her French lover without Yeats' suspecting their existence, but she ultimately tells him everything. Oscar Wilde is on trial. Yeats is reduced, by his brilliant father's feckless ways, to borrowing pound notes here and there; when, at thirty, he finally moves out of his father's house (of which he is the chief support), his sister Lolly writes maliciously to their sister Lily, "WB has taken a room says he can live on 10/- a week, let him try." Yeats angles for political control of a publishing scheme for a series of Irish books, and is outmaneuvered, to his fury. Between the letters and the accompanying notes, we begin to have a sense of the many rooms in which Yeats circulated, the causes he espoused, the people he knew, the division of his life between Dublin and London, the thin soil for literature which he found in a backward and sectarian Ireland.



And yet, through all the harassment, Yeats moves purposefully and, above all, efficiently. Those who saw in him a mystical and artistic poseur missed the single-minded and tenacious will that his father perceived only too well and found distressing. "The qualities which I thought necessary to success in art or in life seemed to him 'egotism' or 'selfishness' or 'brutality,' " Yeats wrote in his fifties. By whatever name one calls them, those qualities necessary to success in the face of considerable adversity were present in Yeats. In spite of his compelling desire to write his own poetry, he gave several years to transcribing and editing Blake, becoming the first responsible interpreter of Blake's "prophetic books;" he collected and argued (against folklorists interested only in "motifs") for ethnologically accurate transcriptions of peasant fairy and folk tales; he read avidly in Standish O'Grady's Irish history, and set his mind to thinking seriously about the relations of national history, national sentiment, nationalist politics, and a national literature. His views on literature and nationalism are sometimes wrong, sometimes incomplete (he is, after all, in his twenties), but never careless. He argues (against Douglas Hyde's espousal of an Irish literature in the Irish language) that Ireland can have a national literature in English—after all, the Americans have done it. He scorns the popular view that Irish writers should pay attention only to the judgment of the Irish public: "The true ambition is to make criticism as international, and literature as National, as possible." Whether through "egotism" or "selfishness" or "brutality," Yeats had to create, largely by himself, Irish poetry, Irish drama, and Irish criticism, and he had also to create a public that would read them.

If public men declared, "Formerly the people were stimulated with poetry, but the condition of the country was now too serious for madrigals," Yeats would show them that not all poetry was madrigals. "Did that play of mine send out / Certain men the English shot?" he later asked, not unreasonably, thinking of "Cathleen ni Houlihan." The "fiery shorthand" of literature was for him nothing trivial: "Literature," he wrote at twenty-nine, "is almost the most profound influence that ever comes into a nation." He could not be less than national in his literary life, given the day-to-day events in Ireland and his own equivocal position as a Protestant who believed Ireland had the right to independence from England:

> I am deep in antiquities trying to grubb up some pearls out of that muddy well of clan squabbles that made up our Sligo history—nothing there though, as epic as the mob yesterday soaking, for momentos, their handkerchiefs in the blood of the men the police shot.

That letter was written the day after some political violence in Cork, during which the police, according to Mr. Kelly, "shot one man dead and wounded four others, two mortally." And yet, in the middle of balked love, family anxiety, political agitation, literary drudgery, and interminable negotiations with publishers (many of the letters of this sort are new), Yeats kept alive that "ceaseless revery about life" which is one basis of art, and "the thrift, the careful casting away of all that is not essential," which is the other. "This endless war with Irish stupidity gets upon my nerves," he wrote after seeing his poems to press. "However if the sun shine in the morning I shall be full of delight of battle & ready to draw my bow against the dragon."

It is in that youthful energy of confident genius that this first volume leaves off. At least eleven more—each no doubt stronger, more profound, and more sardonic than its predecessors—will follow, strengthening our sense of Yeats' personal evolution and tracing his domestic, political, intellectual, and literary networks. It is touching to see, in this volume, Whitman reading Yeats on Sir Samuel Ferguson (in the *Dublin University Review*), and Yeats reading Whitman; to see Yeats commenting on the Canadian Bliss Carman's "Songs from Vagabondia" in Sligo a few years before Wallace Stevens absorbs it in New York. The invisible links that bind poets together are often made visible in this collection. Yeats even tries, when he is in Paris, to call on Mallarmé. Mallarmé has gone, alas, to England. Mallarmé's daughter describes Yeats to her father as "*un espèce d'Anglais . . . ne sachant pas un mot de français.*" Mademoiselle Mallarmé had to mime

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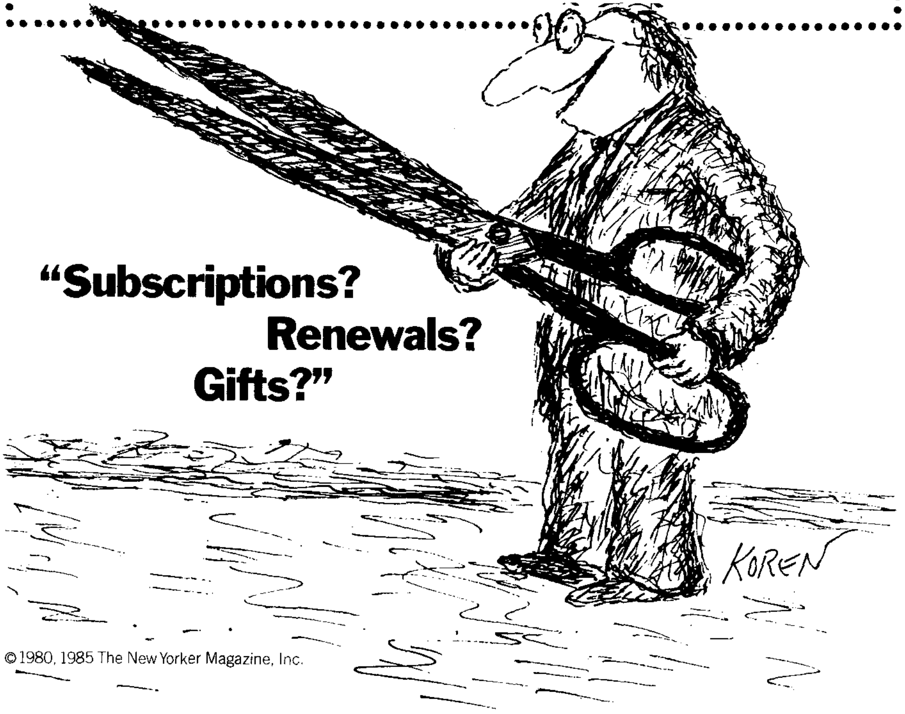
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a sea voyage before Yeats got the point.

The drama of human life has governed Mr. Kelly's sense of what we need to know to grasp the life of Yeats. I have been able to mention only a few of the editor's illuminating notes and vignettes, but they are all worth their weight in gold. The earliest anecdote here shows us Yeats at the age of four: introduced to Edwin Ellis, he asks whether Ellis is related to Cinder Ellis. Truly, poets are born and not made. —Helen Vendler

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Mama, by Terry McMillan (Houghton Mifflin; $16.95). A tough novel about a tough family—one boy, four girls, and their mother—in a black suburb of Detroit. In 1964, few there have heard of Martin Luther King, and still fewer of Malcolm X. "What you know good?" is a demand for local news. Twenty-one years later, the children, scattered from coast to coast, "know bad," from rape to drug addiction; but they also know kindness, and some of them know college. Their mother, meanwhile, has married and divorced about as often as she has gone "on the county" and "on the state." Terry McMillan has composed this, her first, novel in a sort of dialect—"thang" for "thing"—that is easy to read and rings true. There is a nicely ironic clash, near the end, between the mother's "What you dranking?" and one daughter's "I stopped drinking;" it says everything about how far the daughter has come, and why the mother must let her go.

No Country for Young Men, by Julia O'Faolain (Carroll & Graf; $19.50). Precise and melodious writing has distinguished Julia O'Faolain's novels. "The Obedient Wife" (1985) was set in the bright light of California, and "The Irish Signorina" (1986) was set in the clear air of Italy. "No Country for Young Men," first published in Great Britain in 1980, is about, in a sense, the soft, absorbent atmosphere of Dublin. The plot features a naïve American armed with a tape recorder; he has been hired by a filmmaker working for Banned Aid, an Irish-American outfit, to interview old "Joe O'Does" for a nostalgic piece of propaganda. "Dim were de days!" is much of what he hears, and he notes the unintended pun. Then a dotty old nun, adopted by young relatives after her convent is closed down, piques his curiosity about an Irish-American visitor who courted her sister, and who subsequently became (as a New York paper put it, in 1922) a "new martyr to an old cause." By the end, those days are no longer dim, but the difference between martyrdom and murder is.

Note: "Overhead in a Balloon: Twelve Stories of Paris," by Mavis Gallant, has been published by Random House ($16.95). All but one of the stories first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

Coasting, by Jonathan Raban (Simon & Schuster; $17.95). In 1982, the year of the Falkland Islands War, Mr. Raban sailed alone in a comfortable little ketch along the various British coasts—the Irish Sea, the Channel ports, the Thames estuary, the North Country, a slice of Scotland. He tells us of a storm or two, a baleful fog, but his is not a conventional sailing story. Life aboard his Gosfield Maid (its original owner was a brewer from Gosfield, in Essex) gave him a perspective from which to view contemporary England, and it is his views and observations that give "Coasting" its strength and bittersweet charm. Mr. Raban's England is a dismal place—dead fishing ports, tourist cuteness, millions on the dole, a rash of new millionaires, warehouses converted into boutiques, even the sea "a floating cache of chip boxes, Pepsi cans and Yugoplastic beach balls." There is a wary meeting with his fellow-writer Paul Theroux, who was also working on an English travel book, and a touching encounter in Hull with the poet Philip Larkin. This is a wry and wonderful book, perfectly tuned to the world of today.

The Next Left: The History of a Future, by Michael Harrington (Henry Holt; $17.95). Mr. Harrington does not insist that we are about to have a crash, but he does argue, with considerable plausibility, that the West is in crisis, because its industrial system (invented by Henry Ford) and its economic theory (vulgarized Keynesianism) no longer produce the benefits they did in the past. He believes that hardships inflicted by conservative governments—unemployment in Thatcher's Britain and declining standards of living in Reagan's America—offer political opportunities for the Left. A difficulty is that "the reforms of the Left always take place on the terrain of the Right, i.e., they must modify, but also operate within, a system that is hostile to them." This time, Mr. Harrington thinks, the Left must alter the system, which threatens to harden its present inequities into something like a caste society. He offers, for the most part, goals and approaches rather than specific proposals, but his occasional specifics are farsighted. For example, he recommends involving workers from the very beginning in the design of new technology, both to insure that innovation will be humane and to benefit from workers' skills and experience.

MICHELET, by Roland Barthes, translated from the French by Richard Howard (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $18.95). Barthes's second book, translated into English for the first time (and ably), debunks or deconstructs Jules Michelet (1798-1874), the diligent, opinionated, nationalistic, and inexact French historian whose work remains inescapable to the French. Barthes intermingles quotations from Michelet and observations of his own, some of them extremely perceptive: for example, that Michelet's model for the "modern" and "scientific" history he thought he was writing was the then new science of chemistry. More often, however, he emphasizes Michelet's absurdities: for instance, "France, let it be known, is fed on stone," in a discussion of national diets in which Michelet extols French bread. Yet Michelet, no matter how foolish, is unkillable, because he wrote with an unselfconscious, imaginative gusto that few novelists achieve. Many of his passages stand untouched by Barthes's refined analyses: beyond—or maybe beneath—criticism.

NOTE: "The Life It Brings: One Physicist's Beginnings," a memoir by Jeremy Bernstein, has been published by Ticknor & Fields ($16.95). Nearly all the text was first published in *The New Yorker*. . . . "Whereabouts: Notes on Being a Foreigner," a collection of pieces by Alastair Reid, has been published by North Point ($16.95). Most of

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MYSTERY AND CRIME

ONLY WHEN I LAUGH, by Len Deighton (Mysterious Press; $16.95). This is the first appearance in the United States of a novel published in England in 1968 and shortly thereafter made into a successful motion picture. Since Mr. Deighton was even then (as the author of "The Ipcress File") a well-known writer, the book's belated arrival here is something of a puzzle. It was certainly not for any lack of quality. Mr. Deighton recounts the adventures of three British tricksters—a suave public-school type in his forties, his much younger county-class mistress, and a young ex-convict. We meet them in New York City pulling off a highly profitable fake merger; we follow them to London and a fake arms deal; we leave them in Beirut (the beautiful Beirut of the nineteen-sixties) in a final scam that explodes most unpredictably. Mr. Deighton was just as good twenty years ago as he is today, just as entertaining, and much fuller of fun.

NOWHERE MAN, by Jerry Oster (Harper & Row; $15.95). Jacob Neuman, the N.Y.P.D. homicide lieutenant who had the misfortune in the excellent "Sweet Justice" to be teamed with an officer who turned out to be a multiple murderer, is here recalled from premature retirement to investigate the murder of a Madonna-like rock star on the eve of her début in a Broadway play. Mr. Oster now seems to have it in for Jake. He gives him a wife who finds him inadequate in bed; he dresses him like a clown; he gives him a new partner, who is almost at once suspended on suspicion of murder; he burdens him with two additional murders; and he even tries to entangle him with a junkie woman film producer who dresses like a man. Mr. Oster also seems to have it in for us. He is a miser with action and a spendthrift with characters (including the all but inarticulate Jake) who talk and talk and talk. And talk.

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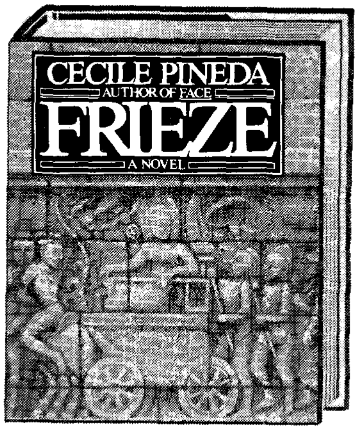

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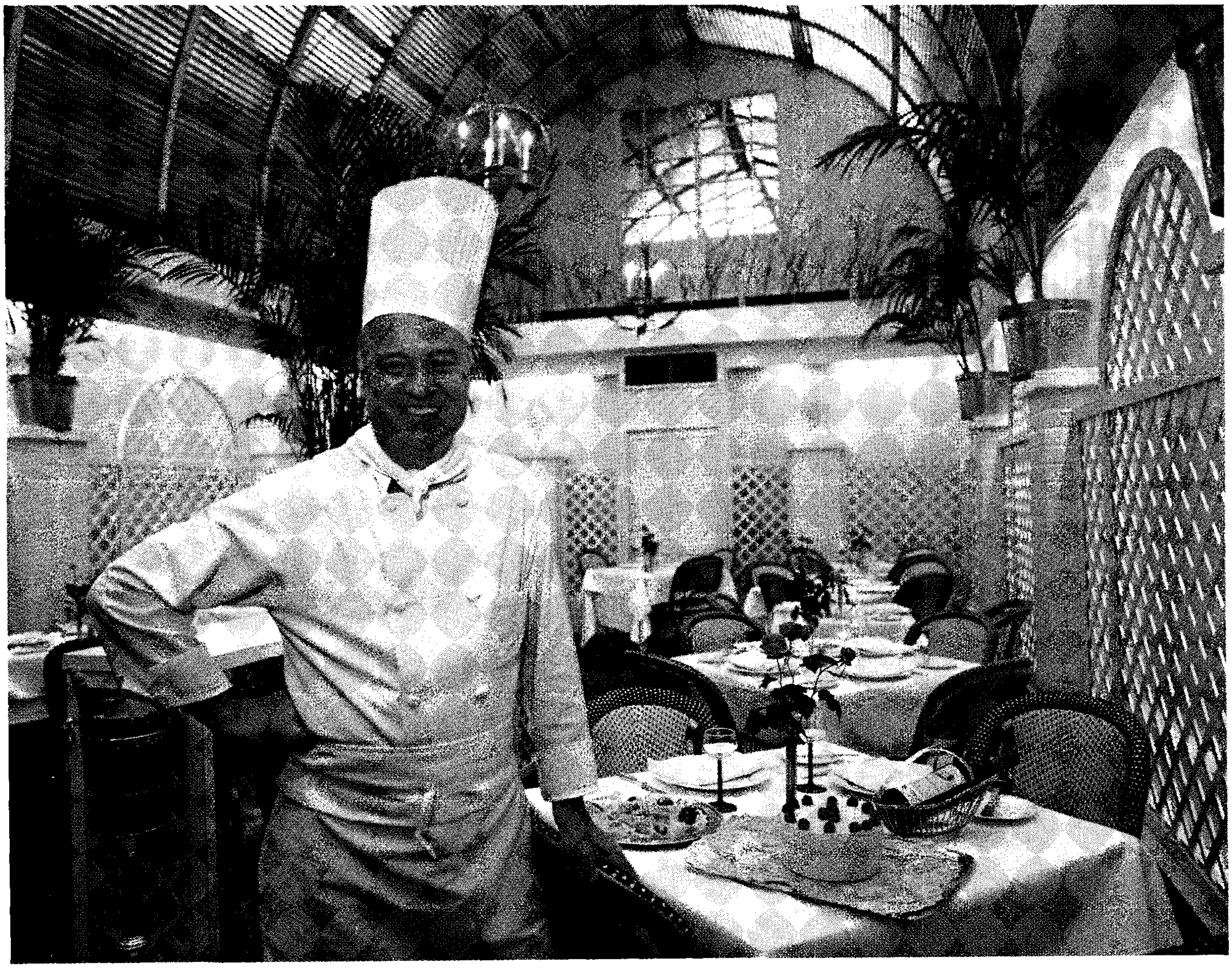

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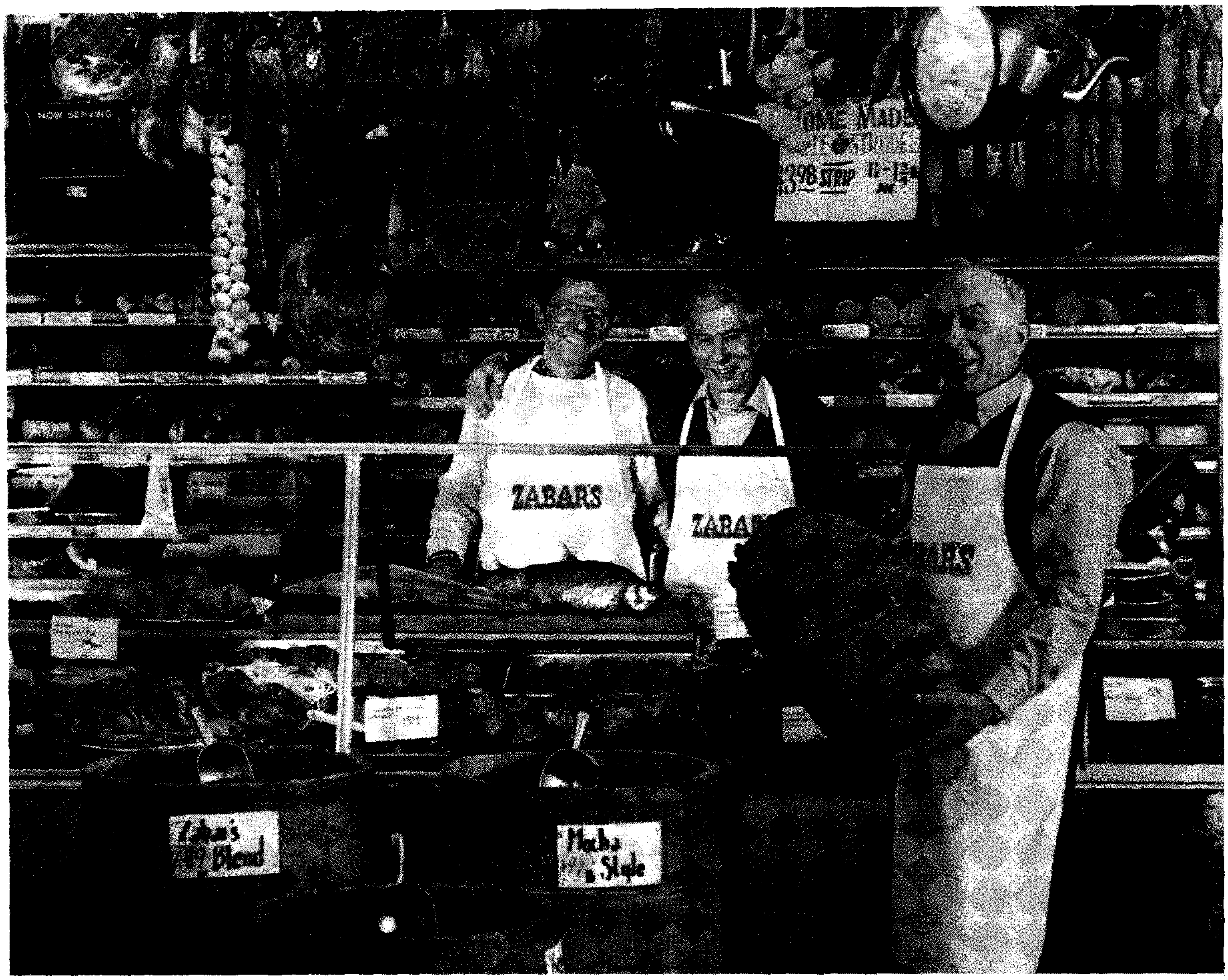
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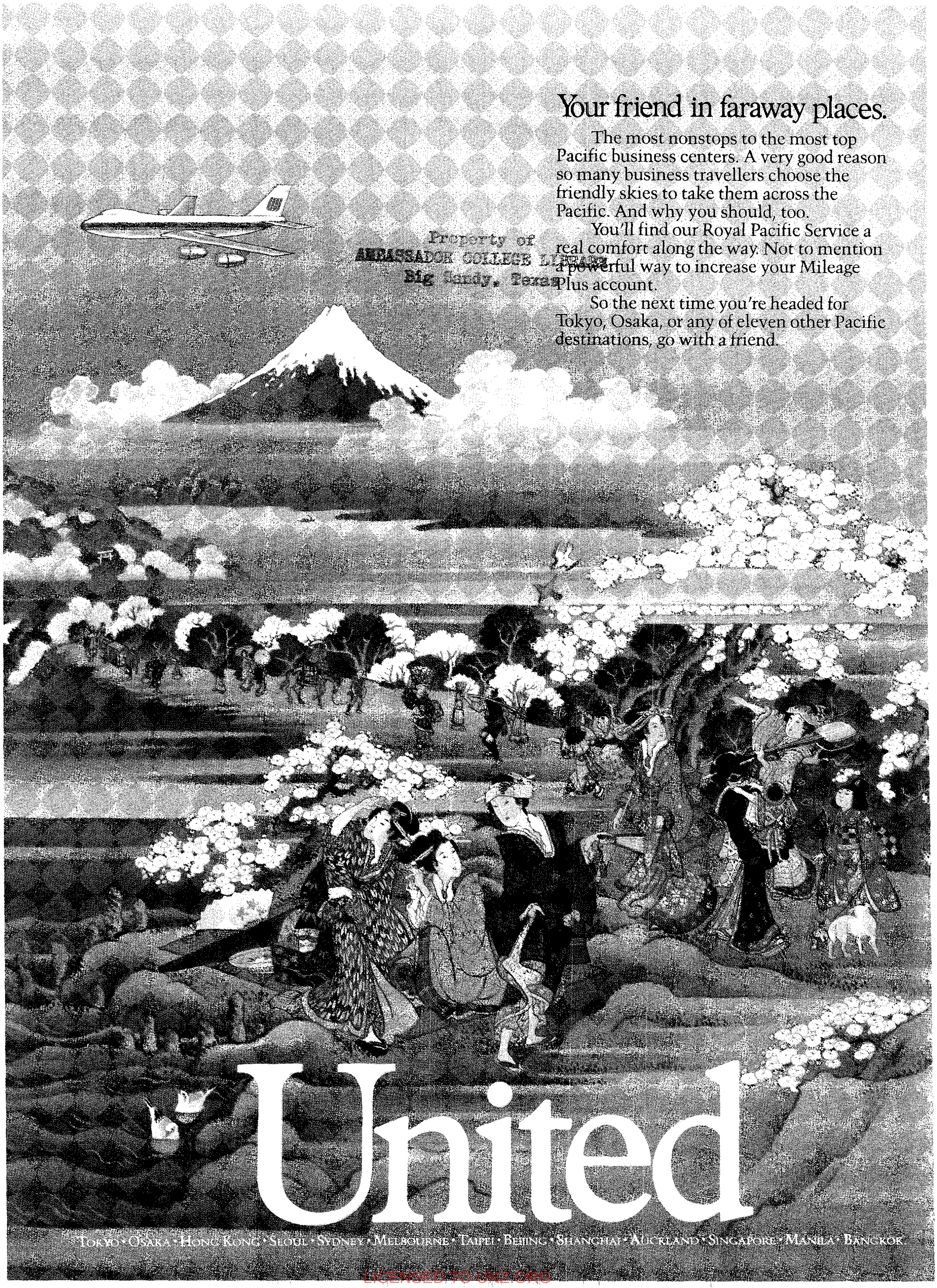

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